



Intel officials say Russia boosting Trump candidacy

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
and MICHAEL BALSAMO
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Intelligence officials have warned lawmakers that Russia is interfering in the 2020 election campaign to help President Donald Trump get reelected, according to three officials familiar with the closed-door briefing.

Trump pushed back Friday accusing Democrats of launching a disinformation campaign.

"Another misinformation campaign is being launched by Democrats in Congress saying that Russia prefers me to any of the Do Nothing Democrat candidates who still have been unable to, after two weeks, count their votes in Iowa. Hoax number 7!" Trump tweeted.



Continued on next page

In this June 28, 2019, file photo, President Donald Trump, right, shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin, left, during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Osaka, Japan.

Associated Press

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President Donald Trump gestures as he walks offstage after speaking at a campaign rally, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

Continued from front

The officials, who asked for anonymity to discuss sensitive intelligence, said Thursday that the briefing last week focused on Russia's efforts to influence the 2020 election and sow discord in the American electorate. The intelligence warning was first reported by The New York Times and The Washington Post.

A senior administration official told The Associated Press that the news infuriated Trump, who complained that Democrats would use the information against him. Over the course of his presidency, Trump has dismissed the intelligence community's assessment of Russia's 2016 election interference as a conspiracy to undermine his victory. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe the private meeting. A day after the Feb. 13 briefing to the House committee, Trump berated the then-director of national intelligence, Joseph Maguire, and he announced this week that Maguire would be replaced by Richard Grenell, a Trump loyalist. Moscow denied any meddling. Kremlin spokesman

Dmitry Peskov said Friday that the allegations are "paranoid reports that, unfortunately, there will be more and more of as we get closer to the elections (in the U.S.). Of course, they have nothing to do with the truth."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi tweeted that, "American voters should decide American elections — not Vladimir Putin." She added that all members of Congress "should condemn the President's reported efforts to dismiss threats to the integrity of our democracy & to politicize our intel community."

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the House intelligence committee, tweeted: "We count on the intelligence community to inform Congress of any threat of foreign interference in our elections. If reports are true and the President is interfering with that, he is again jeopardizing our efforts to stop foreign meddling. Exactly as we warned he would do."

U.S. intelligence agencies say Russia interfered in the 2016 election through social media campaigns and stealing and distributing

emails from Democratic accounts. They say Russia was trying to boost Trump's campaign and add chaos to the American political process. Special counsel Robert Mueller concluded that Russian interference was "sweeping and systematic," but he did not find a criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign.

Republican lawmakers who were in last week's briefing by the DNI's chief election official, Shelby Pierson, pushed back by noting that Trump has been tough on Russia, one of the officials said.

While Trump has imposed severe economic sanctions on Russia, he also has spoken warmly of Russian leader Vladimir Putin and withdrawn troops from areas, like Syria, where Moscow could fill the vacuum. He delayed military aid last year to Ukraine, a Russian adversary — a decision that was at the core of his impeachment proceedings.

The Times said Trump was angry that the House briefing was made before Schiff, the panel's chairman, who led the impeachment proceedings.

Trump on Thursday formally appointed Grenell, the U.S. ambassador to Germany, to replace Maguire as the new acting director of national intelligence. Maguire was required to step down soon under federal law governing acting appointments. The Times cited two administration officials as saying the timing, after the intelligence briefing, was coincidental.

Grenell's background is primarily in politics and media affairs. He lacks the extensive national security and military experience of Maguire, as well as previous holders of the position overseeing the nation's 17 intelligence agencies. □



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AP Exclusive: DEA agent accused of conspiring with cartel

By **JOSHUA GOODMAN**
and **JIM MUSTIAN**
MIAMI (AP) — A once-

standout U.S. federal narcotics agent known for spending lavishly on luxury cars and Tiffany jewelry has been arrested on charges of conspiring to launder money with the same Colombian drug cartel he was supposed to be fighting.

The FBI arrested Jose Irizarry and his wife, Nathalia Gomez-Irizarry, Friday at their home near San Juan, Puerto Rico, according to a law enforcement official familiar with the case.

In an indictment unsealed Friday, federal prosecutors in Tampa, Florida, accuse Irizarry of "secretly using his position and his special access to information" to divert millions in drug proceeds from DEA control.

Prosecutors allege the conspiracy not only enriched Irizarry but benefited two unindicted co-conspirators, neither of whom is named in the indictment. One was employed as a Colombian public official while the other was described as the Colombian head of a drug trafficking and money laundering organization who became the godfather to the Irizarry couple's children in 2015. Irizarry was posted to the Colombian resort city of Cartagena at the time.

When The Associated Press revealed the scale of Irizarry's alleged wrongdoing last year, it sent shockwaves through the DEA, where his ostentatious habits and tales of raucous yacht parties with bikini-clad prostitutes were leg-

endary among agents. But prior to being exposed, Irizarry had been a model agent, winning awards and praise from his supervisors. While an agent in Miami beginning in 2009, he was entrusted with an undercover money laundering operation using front companies, shell bank accounts and couriers. Irizarry resigned in January 2018 after being reassigned to Washington when his boss in Colombia became suspicious.

"It's a black eye for the DEA to have one of its own engaged in such a high level of corruption," said Mike Vigil, the DEA's former Chief of International Operations. He credited federal authorities, however, for identifying the scheme and bringing charges.

The case has raised concerns within the DEA that the conspiracy may have compromised undercover operations and upend criminal cases.

"His fingerprints are all over dozens of arrests and indictment," said David S. Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor in Miami. "It could have a ripple effect and cause courts to re-examine any case he was involved in."

Irizarry and his wife posted \$10,000 bond each and were released. The DEA referred comment to the Justice Department and messages to Irizarry's attorney were not immediately returned.

Starting around 2011, Irizarry allegedly used the cover of his badge to file false reports and mislead his super-



This June 13, 2016 file photo shows Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents in Florida.

Associated Press

riors, all while directing DEA personnel to wire funds reserved for undercover stings to accounts in Spain, the Netherlands and elsewhere that he controlled or were tied to his wife and his co-conspirators.

He's also accused of sharing sensitive law enforcement information with his co-conspirators.

Proceeds from the alleged scheme funded a veritable spending spree. It included the purchase of a \$30,000 Tiffany diamond ring, a BMW and Land Rover as well as a \$760,000 home in Cartagena as well as homes in south Florida and

Puerto Rico, where the couple has been living. To hide his tracks, Irizarry allegedly opened a bank account in someone else's name and used the victim's forged signature and Social Security number.

It also funded the purchase in Miami of a 2017 Lamborghini Huracan Spyder on behalf of a family member of co-conspirator 2.

A red Lamborghini with the same vehicle ID named in the indictment belongs to Jenny Ambuila, who was arrested last year in Colombia along with her father, Oma Ambuila, a customs agent in the port of Bue-

naventura, a major transit point for cocaine and contraband goods used to conceal the proceeds of narcotics sales. Before her arrest, Ambuila shared photos and videos of herself on Facebook posing next to the red sports car, which is valued at more than \$300,000.

The indictment was handed up a week after another former DEA agent was sentenced to four years in federal prison for his role in a decade long drug conspiracy that involved the smuggling of thousands of kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to New York. □



In this Feb. 11, 2020, file photo, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., talks to reporters following a GOP strategy meeting at the Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

McConnell-linked group funds ads helping N Carolina Democrat

By GARY D. ROBERTSON
Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A political committee linked to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is funding ads and other campaign materials designed to meddle in North Carolina's Democratic Senate primary, the group acknowledged on Friday.

Campaign finance documents filed late Thursday show the Faith and Power PAC receiving all of its money so far — \$2.95 million — from the Senate Leadership Fund, which is connected to the Kentucky Republican and designed to help the GOP retain its majority in the chamber.

The PAC, which was just created last month, has run ads that appear to attempt to boost fortunes of state Sen. Erica Smith at the expense of former state Sen. Cal Cunningham. Cunningham was endorsed months ago by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. Cunningham's campaign has decidedly outlasted Smith so far.

The DSCC is targeting a handful of seats to retake the Senate, including the one held by North Carolina Republican incumbent Thom Tillis.

The Faith and Power PAC, which originates from a private mailbox in Jacksonville, North Carolina, began running an ad this month urging voters in the March 3 Democratic primary to back Smith, citing her support for a form of Medicare for All and the Green New Deal. Early in-person voting for the primary began Feb. 13.

A more recent commercial from the PAC also attempts to portray Cunningham as too moderate on gun and LGBT issues. Cunningham started running a response commercial that referred to "deceptive ads" that are "just not true." Cunningham's campaign said he still differs from Smith by opposing Medicare for All and the Green New Deal. Before campaign reports

were filed on Thursday, Democrats already were convinced the PAC's money originated from Republicans, who were trying to force Cunningham or his allies to spend more money helping him win. The PAC's ad buyer and bank already were linked to GOP and conservative causes. Senate Leadership Fund President Steven Law, a former McConnell chief of staff, sought to portray the contributions as a new twist on an old effort by Democrats to interfere in Republican Senate primaries. Six years ago, the campaign of then-Sen. Kay Hagan, a Democrat, spent money against Tillis on mailers while he tried to win his crowded primary. The Senate Majority PAC, linked to then-Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, ran primary TV ads attacking Tillis for troubles in his office while he was state House speaker. "We stole a page out of (Senate Minority Leader) Chuck Schumer's playbook, and it's been more successful than we could have imagined," Law said in a statement Friday. "We got a lot more for our money than when Democrats spent millions in Thom Tillis' primary six years ago."

Outside groups, including the DSCC, and Cunningham's committee have reported spending over \$10 million to date in support of Cunningham's candidacy, according to campaign finance filings.

Cunningham and Smith already had criticized the interference. Cunningham and his allies said Friday the revelation of the involvement of Senate Republicans is more proof that they are worried about the race.

McConnell "meddled in our state's election to try to mislead voters, and it's clear why — he knows Thom Tillis has failed North Carolinians by every measure and he's terrified to face me in November," Cunningham said in a release. "I've got a message for McConnell and his allies — your scheme won't

work and I'll see you in November."

Smith, whose campaign didn't respond to a text seeking comment, tweeted: "We have the support of the people, and I am here to serve the people not the PACs."

Other politically-minded groups have attempted to influence the Senate primaries of competing parties.

A Democratic-backed group ran ads in 2010 that featured comments by a leading contender for Nevada's Senate GOP nomination suggesting that people could barter for health care with chickens. Sue Lowden eventually lost her bid and Republicans nominated Sharron Angle, a tea party conservative, who lost the election to Reid. The group that ran the ads, Patriot Majority, was headed by a former press secretary for Reid.

The conservative Club for Growth said in 2016 it had bought an ad touting liberal Rep. Alan Grayson of Florida, who ultimately lost the Democratic Senate primary to a more moderate opponent.

Tillis' campaign said it had no knowledge of the Faith and Power PAC and its structure except through news reports, according to a spokesman.

The campaign has attempted to link both Cunningham and Smith to Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, pointing to comments the two have made saying they'll support whoever their party's nominee will be.

The primary has "already highlighted that there is no difference between his policies and the radical, liberal agenda of the national Democratic party," Tillis campaign spokesman Andrew Romeo said. Despite the attempts to link Cunningham to Sanders, the Faith and Power PAC ads appear to more closely align the policies backed by Sanders and Elizabeth Warren to Smith. □

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Parent pleads guilty in college admissions scheme

By **COLLIN BINKLEY**
AP Education Writer

BOSTON (AP) — A woman charged in the college admissions scandal pleaded guilty Friday to paying \$400,000 to get her son into the University of California, Los Angeles, as a fake soccer recruit.

Xiaoning Sui, 49, a Chinese citizen who lives in Surrey, British Columbia, pleaded guilty to a single count of federal programs bribery in Boston's federal court.

The charge is used in cases of bribery at organizations that received at least \$10,000 in federal funding in a single year. In this case, Sui is accused of bribing an official at UCLA. Prosecutors are recommending no additional jail time for Sui, who was arrested in Spain in September and held there while authorities extradited her to the United States.

Dressed in a gray sweatsuit and speaking through a Chinese interpreter, Sui said she agreed with the prosecutors' account.

According to charging documents, Sui paid \$400,000 to a sham charity operated by admissions consultant William "Rick" Singer as part of a scheme to have her son admitted as a fake soccer recruit at UCLA.

Prosecutors say Singer worked with Laura Janke, a former assistant soccer coach at the University of Southern California, to fabricate an athletic profile depicting Sui's son as a top player on two soccer clubs in Canada, even though he did not play competitive soccer. Both Singer and Janke have pleaded guilty.

UCLA admitted Sui's son as a soccer player in November 2018, authorities say, and awarded him a 25% scholarship. In September, UCLA said it had taken "immediate corrective action" after learning of the case. Sui's lawyer, Martin Weinberg, said his client was on vacation in Spain when she was arrested on behalf of U.S. authorities. Weinberg said that Sui did not know she was wanted by the U.S. until her arrest. She was initially charged in March 2019, but the document was filed under seal and was not made public until September.

Sui was expected to be released Friday to return to Canada until her sentencing.

The admissions scandal has ensnared dozens of wealthy parents accused of paying bribes to rig their children's SAT and ACT scores or get them admitted as recruited athletes to elite schools across the nation, including Yale, Stanford and Georgetown universities.

More than 50 people have been charged in the scheme, including "Desperate Housewives" star Felicity Huffman, who was sentenced to 14 days in prison for paying \$15,000 to rig her daughter's SAT score. She was released from a federal prison in October after

serving 11 days.

Some others are contesting charges against them, including "Full House" actress Lori Loughlin and her fashion designer husband, Mosimmo Giannulli, who are accused of paying to get their two daughters into USC as fake athletes on the crew team. □



Xiaoning Sui, a Chinese national residing in British Columbia, Canada, leaves federal court, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020, in Boston, after pleading guilty to paying \$400,000 to get her son into the University of California, Los Angeles, as a fake soccer recruit.

Associated Press

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Hundreds of dams lack emergency plans in rain-soaked South

By **DAVID A. LIEB, MICHELLE MINKOFF** and **SUDHIN THANAWALA**

Associated Press

When recent heavy rains swelled a private Mississippi lake and began eroding its earthen dam, Yazoo County Emergency Management Director Jack Willingham was scrambling for a plan.

He had no contact information for any of the homeowners who might need to evacuate, so he drove to the scene and began knocking on doors.

"I was just fortunate that this was a small area and I was able to do it on my own, door-to-door, grunt work," Willingham said.

The dam just north of the state capital of Jackson — known as MS04462 in a state database — had no official hazard rating, no record of state inspections and no formal emergency action plan mapping out the expected flood zone, whom to contact and whom to evacuate were it to fail. It's one of more than 1,000 dams in Mississippi that remain unclassified because of a backlog of work for state regulators.

An Associated Press review also found hundreds of other dams lacking official emergency plans that are located dangerously close to homes in Southeastern states that have been swamped by heavy rains and severe flooding in recent weeks. The AP focused on high-hazard dams — a rating determined by federal or state regulators that means the loss of human life is likely if a dam fails.

The AP review identified 578 high-hazard dams regulated by state or federal agencies that lacked emergency action plans in North Carolina as of summer 2018. It found 259 such dams in Georgia, 111 in Mississippi and 101 in South Carolina. Though the specific numbers may have changed since then (Mississippi now has 106 high-hazard dams without emergency plans), the general problem has not.

"It's important that every



In this Feb. 11, 2020, file, aerial drone photo provided by the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency shows a potential dam/levee failure in the Springridge Place subdivision in Yazoo County, Miss.

dam, and especially those that are considered high-hazard potential, have an emergency action plan," said Mark Ogden, a former Ohio dam safety official who now is a technical specialist with the Association of State Dam Safety Officials.

Emergency action plans can be useful for local government officials, emergency personnel responding to a disaster and people who live in valleys downstream from dams.

The emergency plan for Mississippi's Oktibbeha County Lake Dam, which partially collapsed in a mudslide last month, lists the addresses and names of more than 100 property owners in the Starkville area who could be subject to evacuation if the dam fails. The plan includes color maps showing the potential inundation area and lists roads that would need to be closed. It also describes specific steps to be taken depending on the type of problem at the dam, with the phone numbers of various local and state emergency personnel who should be notified.

Mississippi requires emergency action plans for all high-hazard dams, as well as for some with significant hazard ratings, which ap-

ply to dams whose failure could damage multiple roads or public utilities but are unlikely to kill people.

The Yazoo County dam that developed problems during the recent rain storms had not received a hazard rating because of a backlog at the state regulatory agency. It was one of several thousand previously unregulated dams that came to the attention of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality during a 2016 survey of aerial images and geographic information system data, said William McKercher, chief of the Dam Safety Division.

The survey doubled the dams in the state's inventory from about 3,400 to 6,800, he said. Several years later, his office is still working to establish hazard levels for each dam, which would determine whether formal emergency plans and regular inspections are required.

Emergency action plans are mandated for all high-hazard dams by 43 states and Puerto Rico, according to a survey by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The exceptions include Alabama, the only state without a dam regulatory office, along with Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky,

Vermont and Wyoming.

Even in states that require emergency plans, the AP review shows some dams still lack them. That's because many dams are privately owned, and state agencies have limited powers to force owners to hire professionals to develop the plans, which can cost thousands of dollars.

"Funding is probably the biggest issue," said Ogden, of the dam safety association. "Given the size of the dam and complexity of what could be inundated downstream, it can require significant investment in engineering to do the modeling to determine what areas would be impacted."

In Georgia, state officials updated rules for emergency action plans in 2016 to make it clear that dam owners had to complete them, said Tom Woosley, manager of the state's Safe Dams Program. Since then, the number of high-hazard dams with emergency plans has steadily risen, although some private dam owners still aren't complying.

Dam owners who shirk requirements to develop emergency plans could face fines in Georgia, but Woosley said he can't recall that actually happening.

In many cases, "the dam doesn't generate money, so any money going towards a fine is money going away from fixing a dam," Woosley said.

North Carolina in 2014 began requiring all dams designated as high- or intermediate-hazard to have emergency action plans. Since January 2019, the state has received 183 new emergency plans from dam owners. But 543 of the 1,272 high-hazard dams under the jurisdiction of the state Department of Environmental Quality still lack emergency plans, as do 181 of the 247 intermediate hazard dams, department spokesman Rob Johnson said.

The department "is committed to bringing all dams into compliance with the law," he said. But he said the "dam safety program is under-staffed and under-resourced," with nearly 18 full-time employees to keep track of nearly 6,000 dams in the state.

That's still significantly more staff than is available in Mississippi. The dam safety program there is authorized to have seven people but currently has just three because of vacancies, McKercher said. The office is redirecting some of the unused money for staff salaries to hire contractors to complete emergency action plans for dams in defunct or underfunded watershed districts, he said. Had the dam in Yazoo County's Springridge Place subdivision been previously inspected, officials might have noticed the clogged spillway pipes that caused water to flow over the top of the dam on Feb. 11 and wash away part of its embankment. And had an emergency action plan existed for the dam, it could have saved considerable stress for local emergency officials.

"If we had a plan in place that said hey, here's the problem, here's the numbers we need to call, we can go step-by-step and I could have done it without even being out there," Willingham said. □



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Mom of Idaho kids missing since September arrested in Hawaii

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLER and REBECCA BOONE
Associated Press
HONOLULU (AP) —

The disappearance of an Idaho boy and his teenage sister last year has led to the arrest of their mother in Hawaii, a major development in a bizarre case that spans multiple states, includes three mysterious deaths and touches on the mother's doomsday beliefs.

Lori Vallow, 46, also known as Lori Daybell, was arrested Thursday on an Idaho warrant and was being held on \$5 million bail, according to police on the island of Kauai. Vallow has been charged with two felony counts of child abandonment.

Seven-year-old Joshua "JJ" Vallow and 17-year-old Tylee Ryan have not been seen since September. Police in the city of Rexburg, Idaho, have said they "strongly believe that Joshua and Tylee's lives are in danger."

Newly released court documents in eastern Idaho paint a bleak picture, with police saying Vallow lied several times about her children's whereabouts and that JJ's winter clothes and other belongings have been found in an abandoned storage unit. Rexburg police Lt. Ron Ball wrote in a court document filed this week that Vallow's bank account shows no sign that she is providing money to anyone to care for the kids.

Tylee hasn't been seen since Sept. 8, Ball wrote. JJ was enrolled at a school for three weeks and was

last seen alive there, shortly before Vallow told school workers that she was going to start homeschooling the boy.

"We have not been able to find any witnesses who have seen J.V. since September 24, 2019," Ball wrote in a probable cause affidavit.

Police also have said Vallow and her husband, Chad Daybell, have lied about the children's whereabouts and even their existence. Daybell told someone that Vallow had no kids, and she told another person that her daughter had died more than a year earlier, authorities said.

Vallow must be extradited before she can face charges in Idaho, a process that often takes weeks. Kauai police said in a statement that she was expected to appear in court Friday but provided no other details.

"Vallow abandoned her two minor children, delayed law enforcement's attempts to locate her children, and encouraged another individual to delay law enforcement's attempts to locate her children," referring to a friend of Vallow's in Arizona, according to a statement from Madison County, Idaho, prosecutor Rob Wood's office.

Vallow's attorney, Sean Bartholick of Rexburg, Idaho, did not respond to phone and social media messages seeking comment. An email message to Daybell seeking comment was not immediately answered.

Vallow also is accused of disobeying a court order



This booking photo provided by Kauai police shows Lori Vallow, left; and in this Tuesday, Jan. 7, 2020 file photo Kay and Larry Woodcock, right, speak to members of the media at the Rexburg Standard Journal Newspaper in Rexburg, Idaho.



that required her to bring her children to Idaho authorities last month.

The tangled case includes investigations into three deaths. Vallow's estranged husband, Charles Vallow, was shot and killed in Phoenix last July by her brother, Alex Cox. Cox, who claimed the shooting was in self-defense, died of unknown causes in December.

Lori Vallow moved her family to Idaho in late August. In October, Chad Daybell's wife, Tammy Daybell, died of what her obituary said was natural causes. When Chad Daybell married Vallow roughly two weeks after Tammy's death, law enforcement became suspicious and had her remains exhumed.

Test results on Tammy Daybell's remains and toxicology results for Cox have not yet been released.

Vallow reportedly believes she is "a god assigned to carry out the work of the 144,000 at Christ's second

coming in July 2020," according to divorce documents Charles Vallow filed before his death.

Chad Daybell has written several apocalyptic novels based loosely on theology of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Both were involved in a group that promotes preparing for the biblical end times.

Police questioned Daybell and Vallow about the missing children in late November, and the couple left town before police returned the next day.

In December, Idaho authorities asked police on the Hawaiian island of Kauai for help finding the couple. On Jan. 26, Kauai

police served a search warrant on a rented vehicle and condo the couple were renting in the resort town of Princeville.

Law enforcement plans to hold a news conference Friday about Vallow's arrest and court appearance, police spokeswoman Coco Zickos said.

Idaho prosecutors said Vallow is charged with two felony counts of desertion and nonsupport of dependent children and misdemeanor charges of resisting or obstructing officers, criminal solicitation to commit a crime and contempt of court. The felony charges carry maximum prison sentences of 14 years in prison. □

Associated Press



U.S., Taliban agree to terms for peace deal, troop withdrawal

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The United States and the Taliban said Friday they have agreed to sign a peace deal next week aimed at ending 18 years of war in Afghanistan and bringing U.S. troops home, wrapping up America's longest-running conflict and fulfilling one of President Donald Trump's main campaign promises. The planned Feb. 29 signing depends on the success of a week-long nationwide 'reduction in violence' agreement in which all sides have committed to end attacks. It is due to start at midnight Friday local time (1930 GMT, 2:30 p.m. EST), according to an Afghan official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

The announcement follows months of negotiations between the two sides that have broken down before. Yet both parties have signaled a desire to halt the fighting that began with the U.S. invasion after the September 11, 2001, attacks by Osama bin Laden's Afghanistan-based al-Qaida network.



In this May 28, 2019 file photo, Suhail Shaheen, spokesman for the Taliban's political office in Doha, speaks to the media in Moscow, Russia.

Should the truce stand, the U.S.-Taliban deal would be followed within 10 days by the start of all-Afghan peace talks that could result in the formation of a new government in Kabul, a pledge from the Taliban not to allow terrorist groups to operate in the country, and the phased withdrawal of U.S. and other foreign

troops over 18 months. The plan is a gamble for Trump, who retweeted several news accounts of the agreement. If it's successful, he will be able to claim to have taken a first step toward meeting his 2016 campaign pledge to bring American troops home. But if it fails, Trump could be painted by his Democratic

adversaries in an election year as being naïve and willing to sacrifice the security of U.S. soldiers and American interests for the sake of political expediency.

For the Taliban, the successful completion of the truce and Afghanistan peace talks would give the group a shot at international le-

gitimacy, which it lacked at the time it ran the country and gave bin Laden and his associates safe haven.

The truce, to be monitored by American forces, will likely be fragile and U.S. officials have noted the possibility that "spoilers" uninterested in peace talks could disrupt it. Determining who is responsible for potential attacks during the seven days will therefore be critical.

Both sides were cautiously optimistic in announcing the agreement that had been previewed a week ago by a senior U.S. official at an international security conference in Munich, Germany. The announcement had been expected shortly thereafter but was delayed in part because of Monday's release of the results of Afghanistan's disputed September 2019 elections that showed President Ashraf Ghani winning by an extremely narrow margin. The Taliban, meanwhile, said in a statement that the agreement is intended to achieve nationwide peace and end to the foreign troop presence in the country. □

Associated Press

Canadian PM Trudeau says rail blockades have to end

By ROB GILLIES

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Friday the barricades blocking rail service in Canada have to come down now and court injunctions must be obeyed. Demonstrators have set up blockades in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec in solidarity with opponents of the Coastal GasLink pipeline project that crosses the traditional territory of the Wet'suwet'en First Nation in northwestern British Columbia.

Some hereditary chiefs in the Wet'suwet'en First Nation oppose the natural gas pipeline through their traditional territory, though it has received approval from elected band councils.

Trudeau said the situation is unacceptable and unten-

able and every attempt at dialogue has been made over the last two weeks. He noted some people can't get to work and others have lost their jobs. He said there's no point making the same overtures to indigenous leaders if they aren't accepted.

"We can't have dialogue when only one party is coming to the table," Trudeau said. "The onus is on them." Via Rail, Canada's passenger train service, said this week it is temporarily laying off 1,000 employees due to the continued halt in service on CN Rail's tracks in eastern Canada caused by railway blockades protesting a British Columbia pipeline. CN Rail also announced 450 temporary layoffs.

Trudeau has made reconciliation with Canada's



Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau delivers a statement in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020.

Associated Press

First Nations a priority for his government.

"We are waiting for Indigenous leadership to show that it understands," he said. He said the army won't be called in, saying you don't use the army against Ca-

nadian citizens. He said must be done peacefully.

"Police have a job to do but how they do that, when they do that, no politician gets to say," he said.

The prime minister said they have feared from the start

that situation could get worse and spent the last two weeks showing good faith in an effort to resolve it. He said it would be lamentable if there was violence when the barricades are taken down, but said Canadians cannot continue to suffer as a result of the rail shut down.

Trudeau met with his top Cabinet ministers on Friday. His office said Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations Carolyn Bennett and Minister of Indigenous Services Marc Miller discussed their ongoing outreach to Indigenous leaders across the country.

His office also noted the repeated offers to meet with Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs to address immediate and long-term issues have not yet been accepted. □

EU ends testy budget summit without deal, much work ahead

By LORNE COOK and RAF CASERT

Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European Union leaders broke up a marathon budget summit without a deal Friday and their positions were still so far apart that they could not even decide when to meet again on the divisive issue.

After 28 hours of talks the leaders could not find a compromise, with a half dozen wealthy member states insisting they would not stump up more funds for the bloc's next long-term spending package, worth around one trillion euros (\$1.1 trillion).

"The differences were simply too big," said German Chancellor Angela Merkel. "There is still a lot of work ahead of us."

What's at stake is whether leaders are ready to put their money where their mouths are when it comes to European policy ambitions. At the same time, amid poor economic growth, they cannot afford to give the impression to their home audiences that they are splashing out taxpayers' cash.

"As my grandmother said, to succeed you have to try," EU Council President Charles Michel said. It was not clear yet exactly when a new summit would be set. "The work is going to have to continue in coming weeks and months," said French President Emmanuel Macron. "There have been some improvements but they're not good enough." Beyond the problems of reconciling rich and poorer member states, the departure of Britain at the beginning of the month, which was a high contributor to the EU coffers, also made things tougher.

"It's a very difficult negotiation, especially after Brexit and the gap (of) between 60 and 75 billion euros," said Michel.

The so-called "Frugal Four" of Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden, and a few others, believe the EU's 2021-2027 budget, which is meant to fund ambitious climate change and digital economy policies, should amount to 1% of the 27-nation trading bloc's gross national income.

On the other hand, many of the poorer member states and the European Parliament wanted to stick with a bigger budget of 1.3 percent.

"I can understand that when you're a prime minister in a country that has poor regions, infrastructures, I can understand that ... but when it comes to the percentage, I stand firm," Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen told reporters in Brussels.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said: "There is a way to get out of this. But not tonight."

The tussle over the seven-year budget is almost a tradition in the EU, with long meetings par for the course.

"In the past it was always such. We needed two or three summits. I am hopeful to get a new breakthrough next time," said Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz. It is an issue though that cannot be pushed forward forever. Unlike national budgets, the EU's spending plan cannot be temporarily rolled over based on the terms of the previous seven-year package. The budget's legal basis would evaporate without an agreement.

From next year, funds to help poorer European re-

gions would disappear and five countries that currently receive rebates — a return on their funds because they contribute more than they receive — would lose that money, and their contributions would "skyrocket," EU officials say.

It's not just about this lengthy summit. The whole budget process was launched almost two years ago and the EU's executive commission had insisted it be finished last fall, as the current budget period expires this December.

Broadly speaking, the "Frugal Four" with the backing of Germany are lined up against the "Friends of Cohesion," a group of mainly central and eastern European nations who want to see the continued flow of "cohesion funds" — money earmarked to help develop poorer regions.

"If we want to find an agreement, I think everybody has to be flexible. It cannot be the way that one, or some, countries try to dictate the outcome," said Finnish Prime Minister Sanna Marin. With Britain gone from their ranks, the leaders want



Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte speaks during a media conference at the end of an EU summit in Brussels, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Associated Press

to prove that Europe can still forge ahead toward brighter horizons, but Brexit has left them with a sizable budget hole — about 75 billion euros (\$81 billion) over seven years.

In the great scheme of things this is not a huge amount of money for the world's biggest trading bloc. Even if a trillion euros sounds like a lot, it actually amounts to about 1% of the gross national income of the 27 nations combined.

The budget is also made up of customs revenue and income from fines levied

by the commission, and the EU's executive arm has raked in plenty of those from antitrust cases involving tech firms and others in recent years.

So no country even pays 1% of its own gross national income, and the debate is over some 0.3 percentage points.

But it's not just about convincing reluctant member countries to stump up funds. The European Parliament must also ratify any final budget agreement and for the moment EU lawmakers are far from happy. □

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U.S., Taliban agree to terms for peace deal, troop withdrawal

By **KATHY GANNON** and **MATTHEW LEE**

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The United States and the Taliban said Friday they have agreed to sign a peace deal next week aimed at ending 18 years of war in Afghanistan and bringing U.S. troops home, wrapping up America's longest-running conflict and fulfilling one of President Donald Trump's main campaign promises. The planned Feb. 29 signing depends on the success of a week-long nationwide 'reduction in violence' agreement in which all sides have committed to end attacks. It is due to start at midnight Friday local time (1930 GMT, 2:30 p.m. EST), according to an Afghan official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. The announcement follows months of negotiations between the two sides that have broken down before. Yet both parties have signaled a desire to halt the fighting that began with the U.S. invasion after the September 11, 2001, attacks by Osama bin Laden's Afghanistan-based al-Qaida network. Should the truce stand, the U.S.-Taliban deal would be followed within 10 days by the start of all-Afghan peace talks that could result in the formation of a new government in Kabul, a pledge from the Taliban not to allow terrorist groups



In this May 28, 2019 file photo, Suhail Shaheen, spokesman for the Taliban's political office in Doha, speaks to the media in Moscow, Russia.

Associated Press

to operate in the country, and the phased withdrawal of U.S. and other foreign troops over 18 months. The plan is a gamble for Trump, who retweeted several news accounts of the agreement. If it's successful, he will be able to claim to have taken a first step toward meeting his 2016 campaign pledge to bring American troops home. But if it fails, Trump could be painted by his Democratic adversaries in an election year as being naïve and willing to sacrifice the security of U.S. soldiers and American interests for the sake of political expediency.

For the Taliban, the successful completion of the truce and Afghanistan peace talks would give the group a shot at international legitimacy, which it lacked at the time it ran the country and gave bin Laden and his associates safe haven. The truce, to be monitored by American forces, will likely be fragile and U.S. officials have noted the possibility that "spoilers" uninterested in peace talks could disrupt it. Determining who is responsible for potential attacks during the seven days will therefore be critical. Both sides were cautiously optimistic in announcing

the agreement that had been previewed a week ago by a senior U.S. official at an international security conference in Munich, Germany. The announcement had been expected shortly thereafter but was delayed in part because of Monday's release of the results of Afghanistan's disputed September 2019 elections that showed President Ashraf Ghani winning by an extremely narrow margin. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a statement that the peace agreement, to be signed in Doha, Qatar, by U.S. special envoy for Afghani-

stan Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban representatives, will eventually lead to a permanent cease-fire. The deal also envisions guarantees from the Taliban that Afghanistan will not be used to attack the U.S. or its allies.

"We are preparing for the signing to take place on February 29," Pompeo said. "Intra-Afghan negotiations will start soon thereafter, and will build on this fundamental step to deliver a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire and the future political road map for Afghanistan."

The Taliban, meanwhile, said in a statement that the agreement is intended to achieve nationwide peace and an end to the foreign troop presence in the country.

The statement said both sides "will now create a suitable security situation" ahead of the agreement signing date, invite international representatives to a signing ceremony, arrange for the release of prisoners, structure a path for peace talks, "and finally lay the groundwork for peace across the country with the withdrawal of all foreign forces."

The Taliban added that they will not allow "the land of Afghanistan to be used against security of others so that our people can live a peaceful and prosperous life under the shade of an Islamic system." □

Thousands light up joints during Hindu festival in Nepal

By **BINAJ GURUBACHARYA**
KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) —

Hindu holy men were joined by devotees and the public Friday at a revered temple in Kathmandu where they lit up marijuana cigarettes during an annual festival despite prohibition and warnings by authorities. Hundreds of police officers patrolled the forested area around the Pashupati temple, which was crowded with cannabis smokers celebrating the Shivaratri festival. A group of ruling party law-

makers has recently filed a petition to legalize the farming and use of marijuana. "There is a ban on smoking marijuana but at the same time it is a centuries-old tradition, which we have to respect," said police officer Suman Khadka, adding that no arrests were made. During the festival, devotees visit temples of Hindu god Shiva. Currently, the use of marijuana is punishable by prison sentences of up to a month for users and 10



A Hindu holy man smokes marijuana during Shivaratri festival at the premises of Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu, Nepal, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Associated Press

years for traffickers. "There is really no harm in smoking marijuana, it has been proven to have medical use too," said Bimal Giri, a factory worker who bought joints for 50 rupees (44 US cents) each from a Hindu holy man. Nepal was famous for marijuana and other narcotics in the 1960s, when hippies made their way to the Himalayan nation. Shops and tea houses used to advertise and sell it legally. However, marijuana was outlawed in 1976. □

Algeria on cusp of change as protest movement marks 1 year

By LOTFI BOUCHOUCHI

Associated Press

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) —

Algerians flooded into the streets of the capital and other cities on the 53rd straight Friday of peaceful protests, marking the first anniversary of their "smile revolution" that unseated the North African nation's long-time president.

The revolt also swept aside the former ruler's powerful entourage and struck hard at the corruption they had bred.

The unprecedented pro-democracy movement is still hoping to upend the whole political establishment, even if the tens of thousands of protesters in Algiers now appear less numerous than in the weeks after Feb. 22, 2019.

As weekly Muslim prayers ended Friday, the main thoroughfares in Algiers filled up with protesters young and old, some calling for freedom for imprisoned protesters or for leaders to step aside.

Police, who have arrested dozens of protesters over the past year, stood watch by their vehicles.

Marchers filled the streets of numerous towns, from Tizi Ouzou, capital of the Kabyle region east of Algiers, to the western port city of Oran.

"A year after the beginning of the Hirak our first demand is still there: We will make sure the entire evil regime leaves," said protester



In this file photo dated Thursday, Dec. 19, 2019, Algerian president Abdelmadjid Tebboune delivers a speech during an inauguration ceremony in the presidential palace, in Algiers, Algeria.

Associated Press

Hocine Kadide, using the Arabic name of the movement. "We took the streets to take back power and give it to the people, we took the streets to make sure all the corrupt people will fall."

Africa's largest nation, whose powerful army has shadowed its rulers — or ruled outright — in an opaque system of governance since independence from France in 1962, is on the cusp of a new era, but there is no certainty about what the future will look like.

Authorities in Algeria, a gas-rich nation that has failed to adequately provide for

its booming and youthful population, know they can no longer ignore the citizens they represent.

New President Abdelmadjid Tebboune, once part and parcel of the old guard, recently referred to the "blessed and peaceful popular uprising," and on Wednesday announced that Feb. 22, when the marches began last year, would be a national holiday. He has also promised deep reforms.

"I have decided to go far with radical change to break with bad practices, give political life morals and change the mode of governance," Tebboune

said in an interview with French Le Figaro daily published Thursday.

He said a promised revamped constitution, with input from outside Algeria's circles of power, would be put to a referendum and could be in place by this summer.

That was not enough for some protesters, who sang, took photos and kept pushing their demands.

"We didn't come to celebrate the first anniversary of the Hirak," the crowd chanted. "We came to get rid of you."

Pro-democracy movements have sprung up in other Arab countries, no-

tably Lebanon and Egypt, but either they did not endure as long as Algeria's or were marked by violence.

Algeria, a strategic partner of the West in fighting terrorism, appears set on an inexorable path to change, analysts and activists say.

"Algeria has rediscovered its unity, its dignity," said Samir Belarbi, 48, who spent more than four months in jail for his involvement in the movement. "The system is collapsing, but the movement must go on, remaining peaceful and joyful until the end — which is a new Algeria."

Police had arrested scores of march participants like Belarbi, drawing criticism from Amnesty International. "They arrested me thinking they would weaken the (pro-democracy movement) but it's made up of hundreds of thousands of Algerians ... and it continues," Belarbi said.

The spontaneous protests began with scattered demonstrations in several Algerian towns, filmed and posted on social media. These led to a large demonstration in Algiers, the capital, on Feb. 22, 2019. The trigger was the announcement that then-President Abdelaziz Bouteflika would seek to extend his 20 years in office — despite a 2013 stroke that had left him a nearly invisible leader.

Bouteflika stepped down in April, in the protest movement's first victory. □

Ugandan activist imprisoned for insulting president is freed

By RODNEY MUHUMUZA

Associated Press

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP) —

A Ugandan academic who was imprisoned after insulting the president was freed Thursday by a judge who said she had been wrongfully convicted.

Frank Baine, a spokesman for the prisons service, said Stella Nyanzi was driven back to the maximum-security prison to collect her belongings after the high court ordered her release. Chaotic scenes erupted outside the courtroom as

her supporters tried to protect her from what they believed was an attempt to re-arrest her. Authorities in the East African nation sometimes re-arrest freed suspects by asserting fresh charges.

Nyanzi, who in a Facebook post once described Uganda's longtime President Yoweri Museveni as "a pair of buttocks," was sentenced to 18 months in August after being found guilty of cyber harassment. The former academic fellow at Makerere University



In this photo taken on Monday April 10, 2017, Makerere University researcher Dr Stella Nyanzi, left, gestures in the dock at Buganda Road Court in the capital Kampala, Uganda.

Associated Press

attracted the attention of authorities with bold, often profane descriptions of alleged shortcomings of the Ugandan government, including for its failure to honor a pledge to provide free sanitary pads to schoolgirls. Amnesty International and several Ugandan rights groups had called for Nyanzi's unconditional release. She has a loyal following among some Ugandans who believe she has been unfairly treated for openly criticizing the government. □

Brazil deploys national guard after senator shot in strike

By DIANE JEANTET

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A Brazilian senator was shot Wednesday as he tried to intervene in a strike by military police demanding higher salaries in the north-eastern state of Ceara, prompting authorities to deploy federal forces. Sen. Cid Gomes, a former governor of the state, received a shot in the chest and was taken to a nearby hospital. A statement from the hospital released in the evening said the senator was in stable condition and breathing without medical help.

A video circulating on television showed Gomes trying to drive a backhoe through the gate of a police barrack, behind which balaclava-clad police officers were protesting. It also shows the moment when the vehicle's windows were being shot out. It wasn't immediately clear where the gunfire came from.

Shortly before heading to the protest, Gomes had posted a video on Twitter sharing his anger and calling for people to help him end the strike.

At the protest, Gomes was seen with a bullhorn. "You have five minutes to leave. Not one more," he warned from behind the metal gate



In this July 31, 2019 file photo, a police officer aims his weapon during an operation in the Mare complex slum of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Associated Press

that separated his group from the masked officers. One man standing amid the protesters could be heard yelling at him: "You don't have the authority to do this!" before a brief physical altercation. Minutes later, Gomes attempted to ram the backhoe through the barricade and was hit at least one bullet.

An unknown number of officers began a strike Tuesday, dissatisfied with the

negotiations with the state to raise their pay. In Brazil, the military police are in charge of patrolling the streets, among other duties, and it is illegal for them to strike.

Throughout the day, small acts of vandalism have occurred across the state. Masked men invaded several police barracks, smashing police windows and puncturing tires. In one instance, men drove off with patrol cars and

parked them in line blocking nearby streets.

In the city of Sobral, where the 56-year-old former governor was injured, men wearing balaclavas on-board police vehicles forced businesses to shut their doors for the day, on-line news portal G1 reported.

The Public Security Secretary said in a press conference around mid-day, hours before Sen. Gomes was shot, that authorities

would not tolerate the illegal strike. The state secretary said some 260 officers were already under investigation, and that any striking policeman would be banned from receiving its salary and possibly fired.

Justice and Public Minister Sergio Moro said in a statement Wednesday night it would deploy federal forces to help maintain order. The federal police and federal highway police have also been sent to Sobral to ensure the security of Gomes.

The Brazil Forum of Public Security, an independent organization that tracks national crime statistics, condemned the violence. "However legitimate the public security officers' salary demands are, it is unacceptable that bad policemen spread fear and panic among the population," a statement read.

In 2017, hundreds of police went on strike in Brazil's Espirito Santo state and were indicted. The standoff produced a wave of violence, looting and burning of buses. Schools were closed, and medical services and public transportation interrupted. To stem the tumult, the federal government deployed more than 3,000 troops from the military and the national guard. □

Mexican suspect once lived with dead girl's family

MEXICO CITY (AP) — A woman who allegedly took a seven-year-old girl away from school to be killed may have lived with the girl's family for a while in Mexico City to escape domestic violence.

The revelation may explain why the girl identified only as "Fatima" went willingly with the suspect - because she knew her.

Mexico City's police chief, Omar Garcia, said Thursday that the female suspect and her husband are being held on charges they tried to bribe police into letting them go. Authorities hope to bring kidnapping or murder charges against them soon.



Relatives post a photo of Fatima, a 7-year-old girl who was abducted from the entrance of the Enrique C. Rebsamen primary school and later murdered, at her home in Mexico City, Monday, Feb. 17, 2020.

Associated Press

The killing shocked Mexico after Fatima's body was found in a plastic bag.

The girl's mother, María Magdalena Antón, told Milenio television the fe-

male suspect had once sought shelter at her home "because she said her husband wanted to kill her."

The suspect later apparently returned to her husband. While authorities have not revealed the cause of death or any abuse Fatima suffered before her death, Garcia did say that police found plastic zip ties that were apparently used to restrain the girl at a house near where she was abducted on Mexico City's south side.

Fatima was last seen on video leaving her school on Feb. 11 with a woman who was not her mother. That day, her mother was about 15-20 minutes late to pick

her up, according to family members. In Mexico City, even grade-school students at public schools often simply walk after classes to meet parents waiting on the sidewalks; authorities have now pledged to tighten controls to ensure a parent or designated caretaker is there to meet them. Separately, there were developments in the death of a 5-month-old baby girl whose body was found in a vacant lot in the northern state of Coahuila. Authorities said Thursday that mother apparently dumped her body there after the infant died of an illness, and then falsely reported she had been abducted. □

LOCAL



Fishing in Aruba is on fire

By Joris Zantvoort

ORANJESTAD — On a cruise looking for a stop-over? Or are you planning a winter angling getaway? Either way, you're in luck because fishing in Aruba is on fire! After years of flying under international anglers' radars, it seems like this colorful island is finally starting to get the attention it deserves. And it's precisely in the dead of winter, when half the world freezes over, that Aruba's fishery shines the brightest.

February continues to bring good weather to Aruba. With temperatures just under 90 °F, this place is perfectly suited for water activities.

More importantly, the island provides easy access to some of the finest fishing grounds in the entire Caribbean.

In February, there's a whole host of exciting fish to catch here. The nearby flats are great for catching Baby Tarpon and Snook on



Captain of the Month

Captain Dennis has fished around the globe in various major tournaments, with numerous wins under his belt. A fisherman in the most genuine sense of the word, he is used to landing big fish, first as his sport, now as his job.

The Captain's pride and joy is, of course, his beautiful boat, Lady Sarah. This 40-footer comes with all the amenities you'll need on an offshore trip, including a fish finder, fighting chair, and air-conditioning. On a trip with Dennis, you'll

have all the necessary gear, as well as live bait and drinks. There will be a first mate on board to assist you with your gear and technique. You can bring your kids along, too, as long as they are older than 6.

Once you're back ashore, you'll split the catch with the crew, and they will fillet and clean it for you so you can have that nice dinner afterwards.

For more information: <https://fishing-booker.com/destinations/country/aw>. □



the fly. If you're lucky, you might even hook a Permit or two. Fly fishing can be challenging due to the windy conditions, so make sure you have an experienced guide with you.

If you're looking for something a little less demanding, head for the reefs. Here, you'll find some of the best food fish the Caribbean has to offer! Wahoo and Mahi roam these waters, and they've been absolutely fabulous recently.

Captain Dennis aboard

Lady Sarah just caught several Wahoo on one trip the other day.

The great thing about a trip like this is that your guide will clean and fillet your catch, so you can just bring it to a local restaurant for dinner.

The action doesn't stop there, however. Head further out, and you'll get a chance to battle some of the most exciting game fish around. From Bull Sharks to White Marlin and Sailfish, Aruba's offshore grounds will put even the experienced angler to the test. □



Urban Chic in Tropical Beach Décor: Coral Shell Condominiums is made with Family Love



ORANJESTAD —The Caribbean is a paradisiacal place where anyone would like to own their own condo to enjoy family, retirement, sun, sand and sea, and leisure. Making the perfect choice for that perfect place in the jungle of offerings can be a hassle. Well, in case you are looking for the best in all senses, Coral Shell is a must-see. We will tell you why.

The best comes from the heart and in the case of Coral Shell Condominiums it is the owners who built this place as their own home. Actually it is their own home as they will live in one of the exclusive condominiums themselves. Marisabel and Albert are a warm, genuine, hard-working and driven-by-perfectionism and passion kind of couple. They do not only care for the luxury private residence they are building but take the environment into consideration in their concept as they are the park-keepers of the adjacent Boy Ecury Park. Aruba Today was shown around by the owner who while explaining all the beauty that surrounds us mentions he is a medical specialist in origin. That explains his accuracy with every tiny detail and his decision for only the best quality products. There are 16 apartments in the range from one, two, three, four and five bedrooms.

The building

The building is unique with 2 centimeter thick marble floors, exterior façade in Dominican Coral Stone, walls with concrete blocks – not dry wall, double glass windows with UV protection and sound control, a double system of air conditioning, sound control and waterproof mat under marble floor to isolate noise, fire and gas detectors in all apartments, laundry rooms and each kitchen has an InSinkErator.

The impeccable architecture is inspiring; appearing to have an art-museum vibe. Correct, says Albert, the architect is inspired by Spanish artist Gaudi among others. The walls seem to flow in a natural way and fit perfectly into the sun-lit place and surrounding colors of nature. The kitchens are all 100% Italian brand and even installed by Italians who call this place “Palazzo”. “They said to have installed kitchens all over the world but never saw a condominium residence where all is matched so perfectly,” the owners say. “I can say with pride that this is the most exclusive condominium in the Caribbean.”



The location

You have a priceless view offering 180 degrees that gives you a turquoise ocean, big blue sky, lush green gardens and the Linear Park urban walkway. Open air, sea, sand, city and more sea ... all in one. Stroll in Boy Ecury Park, play with the children in Linear Park, take a dive in the ocean just in front of you and walk to one of the many restaurants that are close-by. Coral Shell has all the options in one. Most of the time you have to make a choice between a seaside location, urban environment or inland greens but here you have it all. Did we mention you have your private parking under the roof? Also there is round-the clock security guard and video surveillance. How about the Infinity pool with hydro jets and the outdoor terrace with bar, sun deck, fitness center and multipurpose court? Now we did. You must see it for yourself to experience the magic of Coral Shell, the owners will be honored to guide you around! □



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Sand sculpture in honor of Ralph Passante



PALM BEACH — Marc Mangia, an award-winning Pro-AM Sand Sculptor born, raised, and lives in Columbus (Blacklick), Ohio has been sculpting sand for 15 years. What started as a

way to play with the kids and keep busy on vacations has become his loved hobby. Mangia competes in 3 to 4 competitions a year - Ft Myers Beach, FL; Port Huron, Michigan; Port

Aransas, Texas; and Yarmouth, Maine. He has placed 1st several times and also People's Choice. Aside from competitions, Marc is a Semi-Retired Carpenter.



Mangia has been coming to Aruba for 20 years, and every year his castle creations have grown! This year he spent over 90+ hours in a two week period doing a church and memorial for a dear friend. He knew before coming this year that he wanted to do the Alta Vista Chapel that is here in Aruba. Once he was there in Aruba and getting started, he learned that a good friend, Ralph Passante whom he had meet there in Aruba 15 years ago, had suddenly passed away. Passante always loved watching Mangia work on his sandcastles and was always a protector of them. Passante is

greatly missed this year on the beach and Mangia decided to do a memorial in honor of him. Since owning their timeshare at the Marriott Vacation Club for 17 years, Mangia has made many wonderful friends. Friends that have become his Aruba Family. He looks forward to coming back every year, mid-January thru mid-February, and catching up with all them. Aruba is Mangia's home away from home! He says Aruba has the best sand for sculpting.

Rest in peace Ralph Passante. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends. □

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International Mother Language Day: Do you know Papiamentu?

ORANJESTAD — On May 21, 2003, Papiamentu was recognized as an official language in addition to Dutch. Dutch and the local language, Papiamentu, are the official languages of Aruba, but most Arubans speak a minimum of four languages including English and Spanish. Yesterday was International Mother Language Day. Let's see what you know about Papiamentu.

Aruba's native language embodies the friendliness for which the local population is known, with the language marked with an inclusive and open nature as represented in its unique sayings and mannerisms. Unique to the ABC islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao, Papiamentu evolved from a rudimentary pidgin language, utilized for the purposes of communication among peoples with

different native languages, into the more complex language it is today. At its base, the language is an Afro-Portuguese Creole, which, over the years, has grown in syntax and lexicon with increased borrowings from Dutch, English and Spanish, but still possessing its own unique rhythm and meanings.

Although in use as the native language for 300 years, Papiamentu was only declared Aruba's official language, alongside Dutch, as of March 19, 2003. - Source: University of Aruba.

43% languages endangered

Languages, with their complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development, are of strategic importance for people and planet. Yet, due to globalization processes, they are increasingly under



threat, or disappearing altogether. When languages fade, so does the world's rich tapestry of cultural diversity.

Opportunities, traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking and expression — valuable resources for ensuring a better future — are also lost.

At least 43% of the estimated 6000 languages spoken in the world are endangered.

Only a few hundred languages have genuinely

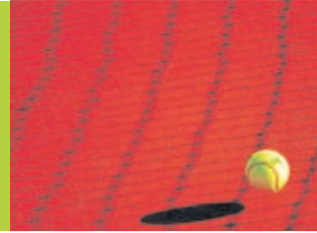
been given a place in education systems and the public domain, and less than a hundred are used in the digital world. Languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage.

All moves to promote the dissemination of mother tongues will serve not only to encourage linguistic diversity and multilingual education but also to develop fuller awareness of linguistic and cultural traditions

throughout the world and to inspire solidarity based on understanding, tolerance and dialogue. Every two weeks a language disappears taking with it an entire cultural and intellectual heritage.

International Mother Language Day has been observed every year since February 2000 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism. -Source: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/mother-language-day>. □

SPORTS



American women seek more than \$66M in damages from U.S. Soccer

By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Sports Writer

Players on the U.S. women's national team are seeking more than \$66 million in damages as part of their gender discrimination lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation.

The damages were included in a slew of papers filed Thursday night in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles ahead of a trial scheduled to start May 5.

Among the documents filed were the separate collective bargaining agreements of the U.S. men's and women's teams, which had not previously been made public.

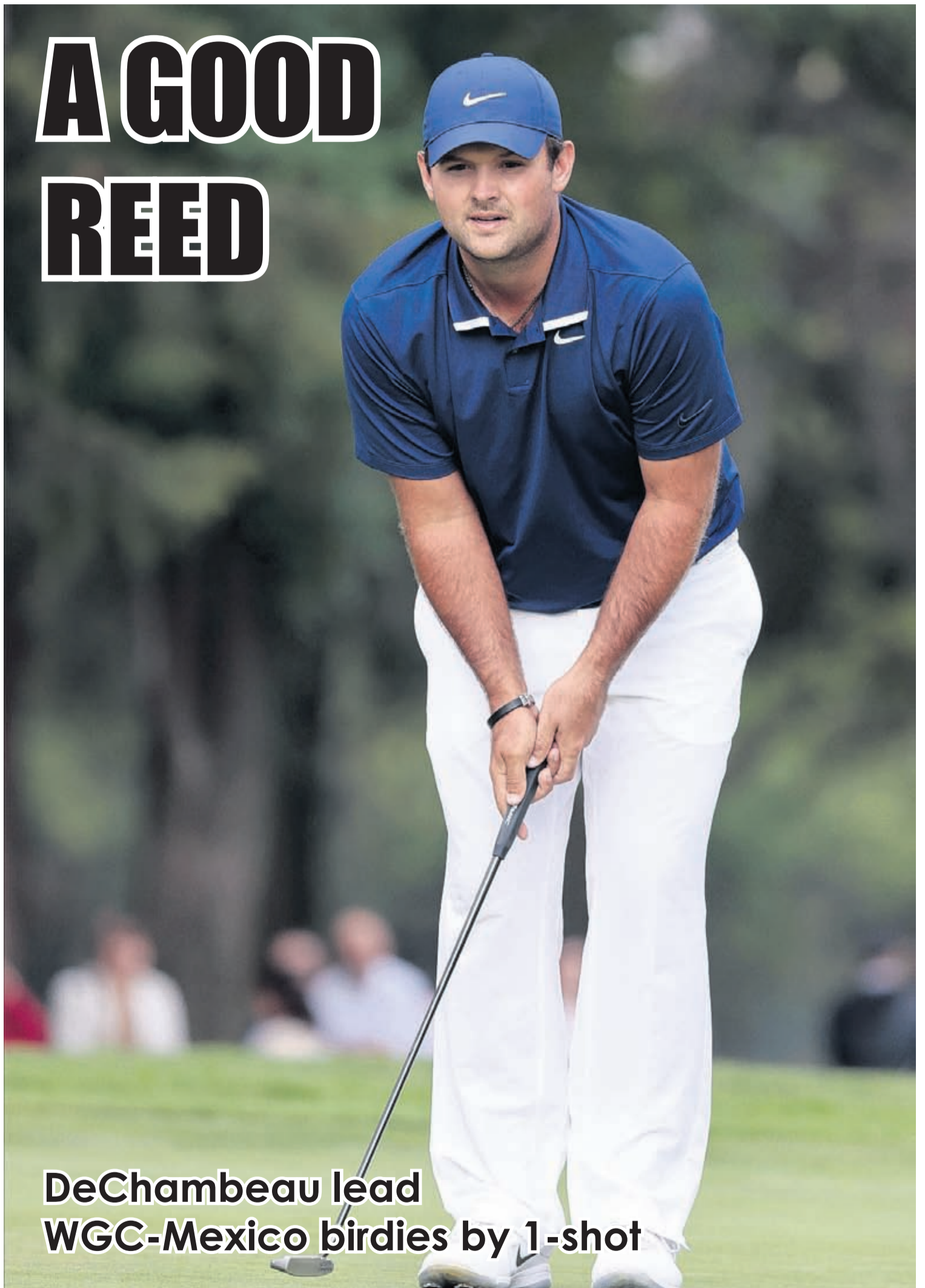
Players on the women's national team sued the federation last March alleging institutionalized gender discrimination that includes inequitable compensation between the men's and women's teams.

Each side in the class-action lawsuit asked for a summary judgment in their favor. The estimate of damages, including interest, was provided by Finnie Bevin Cook, an economist from Deiter Consulting Group, which was retained by the suing players.

The collective bargaining agreements showed a disparity in bonuses but also highlighted the different pay structures between the two teams.

A GOOD REED

DeChambeau lead WGC-Mexico birdies by 1-shot



Continued on page 22

Patrick Reed of the United States follows his putt on the 18th green during the second round for the WGC-Mexico Championship golf tournament, at the Chapultepec Golf Club in Mexico City, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Associated Press
Page 18

Bryson DeChambeau birdies his way to 1-shot lead in Mexico

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Bryson DeChambeau kept making so many birdies in the Mexico Championship that when he rolled in his ninth one from 45 feet, all he could do was throw his hands in the air in pure wonder.

He wasn't alone Friday in making birdies, although Rory McIlroy would like to have joined the party.

DeChambeau made seven birdies in an eight-hole stretch at Chapultepec Golf Club for an 8-under 63, giving him a one-shot lead over Erik van Rooyen of South Africa and Patrick Reed at the halfway point of this World Golf Championship. DeChambeau was at 11-under 131.

Van Rooyen, who played college golf at Minnesota, celebrated his 30th birthday by making nine birdies to tie the course record with a 62. Reed made five birdies on the back nine for a 63.

Justin Thomas ran off four straight birdies to end the back nine, and then holed a 35-foot eagle putt to build a three-shot lead through 10 holes. That was gone in a matter of four holes as player after player kept rolling in putts on a day with much less wind and far better scoring. The average score 70.28, more than two shots better than



Bryson DeChambeau of the United States follows his tee off at the tenth hole during the second round for the WGC-Mexico Championship golf tournament, at the Chapultepec Golf Club in Mexico City, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Associated Press

Thursday.

Hideki Matsuyama was 9 under for his round through 15 holes and had a 20-footer birdie attempt from the fringe on the par-3 seventh. He missed that 3 feet to the left, then missed the next one. He bogeyed the next hole, too, and had to settle for a 64. That left him at 9-under 133, along with Thomas, who had to settle for a 66.

McIlroy wasn't so fortunate. Staked to a two-shot lead at the start of the day, he opened with eight straight pars, didn't make a birdie

until his 12th hole and fell six shots behind at one point. Two birdies at the end gave him a 69, and the world's No. 1 player was only three shots behind.

"I made eight pars in a row, and then it's like, 'OK, you're either going to make a birdie or a bogey. What's going to come first?' And I ended up making bogey," McIlroy said. "There's a long way to go."

DeChambeau can use all the science he wants with calculations for altitude and air density. The difference for him on this day

wasn't that difficult to figure out.

"I just made a lot of putts today," he said.

His big run began on the 18th hole with a 15-foot birdie putt. He got up-and-down from short of the green on the reachable par-4 first hole, made a 15-footer on the net hole, added a few birdies inside 6 feet, and then made a 25-foot birdie. That apparently wasn't enough.

His tee shot on the 223-yard seventh hole with a green fronted by water went toward the back of the

putting surface, leaving DeChambeau a downhill putt that is tough to lag. His putt was perfect pace, and a perfect line, as it turned out.

"I just threw my hands up in the air. I mean, come on. Who thinks I'm going to make this one?" DeChambeau said. "Matt (Fitzpatrick) just looked at me and he was like, 'What are you doing? Go get a lottery ticket or something.'"

Reed seems to play his best with a chip on his shoulder, and his 63 comes after a week in which Brooks Koepka and ex-CBS broadcaster Peter Kostis brought up his rules violation in the Bahamas, stirring more bad memories.

"I'm not going to lie, just the whole thing on the outside distracts us from our ultimate goal, and that's to go out and play great golf and continue to try to improve every day on and off the golf course," Reed said. "As long as you're doing that, then you're living the right way. So at the end of the day, you can't please everybody, and I feel like I'm doing everything I need to be doing to continue to strive in the game of golf, hopefully on and off the golf course."

Most intriguing of the lot is van Rooyen, who finished the year among the top 50 to earn his first trip to the Masters. □

Rybakina reaches 4th final of 2020 in Dubai; facing Halep

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan will play her fourth final of the young WTA season at the Dubai Championships.

Rybakina beat eighth-seeded Petra Martic of Croatia 7-6 (5), 7-6 (2) in the semifinals on Friday, coming from a break down and saving a set point in each set.

In the final on Saturday, Rybakina will face top-seeded Simona Halep, who dispatched American qualifier Jennifer Brady 6-2, 6-0. So far this year, Rybakina has, in succession, played the Shenzhen final, won Ho-



Kazakhstan's Elena Rybakina returns the ball to Croatia's Petra Martic during a semi final match of the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

bart for her second career title, and reached the St. Petersburg final last week. "It's amazing what (Ry-

bakina's) done already this year," Halep said.

"I saw her a little bit during some matches.

She has a big serve. I have to pay attention on my return and to be like today: Confident, aggressive if there is a chance, just fighting. It's the best thing to do now."

This week alone, Rybakina has knocked out new Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin and former No. 1 Karolina Pliskova. Against the tricky Martic, Rybakina fought in the rallies to outlast the Croatian. She stopped Martic from serving out the set at 5-4, and

came from 3-0 down in the second.

"She has really good slices," Rybakina said of Martic.

"Her serve, it's not flat like I played with Pliskova for example. It's a completely different style of game. It was not easy to start against her. But I tried to work every point. Second set, I was 3-0 down, but I knew it's going to be easier to win this set than play a third one. I wanted to win the second so much."

No. 2-ranked Halep goes after her second Dubai title, her 20th singles title, and her first since 2019 Wimbledon. □

Heat retiring Dwyane Wade's No. 3 this weekend

MIAMI (AP) — Dwyane Wade says that whenever he would hear the national anthem play before Miami home games, he would take a moment and look to the rafters.

"I always imagined my jersey being up there," Wade said.

He will no longer have to imagine the sight. After this weekend, it'll be there for good.

Wade will become the fifth Heat player to get his number retired by the team, joining Alonzo Mourning, Tim Hardaway, Shaquille O'Neal and Chris Bosh. A three-day celebration of Wade's time in Miami starts on Friday, a weekend highlighted by his No. 3 formally going to the rafters on Saturday night when the Heat play host to the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Wade spent 16 seasons in the NBA, 14½ of those with the Heat. He was one of two players to be part of all three Heat championship teams — Udonis Haslem, whose No. 40 will almost certainly be retired by the team one day, is the other. It was never a question of whether Wade's jersey was going to be retired by the Heat, only a question of when. He's the franchise's all-time leader in points, games, assists and steals and is probably going to keep most, if not all, of those records for a very long time. Consider: He



Dwyane Wade arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

Associated Press

scored 21,556 regular-season points with the Heat, and Alonzo Mourning is second with 9,459.

Earlier this season, Los Angeles Clippers coach Doc Rivers — like Wade, a Chicago native who went on to play at Marquette — said he believes Wade doesn't get enough credit for what he did as a player, especially in the NBA Finals. "He's been underrated his whole life," Rivers said. "He didn't get recruited very highly. Took Marquette to a Final Four. He still didn't go as high as he should have in the draft and then he took the Miami Heat to NBA championships. That's just who he is."

Wade was the 2006 NBA Finals MVP, was selected to 13 All-Star Games in his 16 seasons, was an All-Star MVP in 2010 and won an Olympic gold medal.

"Every time I look up to the rafters and see your #3 hanging there, I'll think of the impact you had not only on this organization, this city and this league, but on my life," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra wrote in an open letter to Wade that will be part of the team's game-night giveaway program for fans on Saturday. The weekend also includes a night of tribute speeches on Friday and a showing of a documentary about Wade on Sunday. □



Atlanta Hawks guard Trae Young (11) passes as Miami Heat forward Bam Adebayo defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

Trae Young scores career-high 50 points, Hawks beat Heat

By The Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Trae Young had a career-high 50 points and the Atlanta Hawks scored the last 10 points to beat the Miami Heat 129-124 on Thursday night.

Young made 18 of 19 free throws and 8 of 15 3-pointers to set his scoring high in his first game after starting in the NBA All-Star Game.

Bam Adebayo had 28 points and a season-high 19 rebounds for Miami. Adebayo, the NBA All-Star skills champion, added seven assists.

Miami couldn't hold a late 124-119 lead. After De'Andre Hunter's tying 3-pointer, Cam Reddish scored with 31 seconds remaining following his steal from Goran Dragic to give the Hawks a 126-124 lead. Young's two free throws increased the lead to four points.

Miami has lost five of its last six games.

Kevin Huerter and Hunter each scored 17 points for Atlanta.

76ERS 112, NETS 104, OT

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Joel Embiid had 39 points and 16 rebounds, Alec Burks and Shake Milton added big baskets in overtime and Philadelphia beat Brooklyn. Playing without All-Star point guard Ben Simmons

because of lower back tightness, Philadelphia improved its record at the Wells Fargo Center to 26-2 on the season. The 76ers are 9-19 on the road.

Tobias Harris added 22 points and 12 rebounds boards for the 76ers. Burks had 19 points, including a pair of layups in overtime that gave Philadelphia the lead for good.

Caris LeVert scored 25 points for Brooklyn, which announced before the game that Kyrie Irving would have season-ending surgery on his right shoulder.

BUCKS 126, PISTONS 106

DETROIT (AP) — Giannis Antetokounmpo had 33 points and 16 rebounds to help Milwaukee rout Detroit.

The Bucks led 70-41 at half-time and by 34 points in the second half. Detroit could never get enough stops to mount any significant rally in the final two quarters.

Former Piston Khris Middleton added 28 points for the Bucks, who won for the 15th time in 17 games. Eric Bledsoe had 19 points and Brook Lopez 18.

The Pistons have lost five straight since trading Andre Drummond to Cleveland on Feb. 6 and were playing for the first time since buying out Reggie Jackson's

contract. Christian Wood, one of seven players in the game who has played for both teams, had 18 points and 11 rebounds. Bruce Brown finished with 16 points and 10 rebounds.

ROCKETS 135, WARRIORS 105

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — James Harden had 29 points and 10 assists, leading Houston past cold-shooting Golden State in the teams' first game back from the All-Star break.

Russell Westbrook had 21 points and 10 assists before being ejected, while P.J. Tucker scored 15 points. He made all five of his 3-pointers as the Rockets knocked down 25 total — a franchise record allowed by the Warriors against any opponent. Houston set an NBA record with 27 3s in a win against the Suns last April.

Robert Covington added 20 points and all five Houston starters scored in double figures as the Rockets ran away with this one early after losing 116-104 at Chase Center on Christmas Day.

Andrew Wiggins scored 22 points in the Warriors' fifth straight loss and also their fifth consecutive at home. Draymond Green dished out seven assists after getting nine in each of his previous two games. □



Hayes scores in OT, Flyers sweep home-and-home with Columbus

By The Associated Press
COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Kevin Hayes scored 3:51 into overtime, and the Philadelphia Flyers beat the Columbus Blue Jackets 4-3 on Thursday night to sweep the home-and-home series between Metropolitan Division contenders.

Philadelphia trailed 3-1 before Nicolas Aube-Kubel and Claude Giroux scored 1:26 apart in the second period. After a scoreless third, Hayes snapped a shot from the slot past Elvis Merzlikins for his 19th of the season.

The Flyers, who routed the Blue Jackets 5-1 on Tuesday, are in third place in the Metro with 75 points, five behind Pittsburgh and Washington. Columbus has dropped seven in a row, but it has the first wild-card spot, one point ahead of the New York Islanders and Carolina.

Travis Konecny had a goal and an assist for Philadelphia, which improved to 12-5-2 in its last 19 games dating to Jan. 7. Brian Elliott had 28 saves.

Oliver Bjorkstrand and Nick Foligno each had a goal and an assist for Columbus. Stefan Matteau scored his first goal in more than four years, and Merzlikins had 29 saves.

CANADIENS 4, CAPITALS 3, OT

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ben Chiarot scored his second of the game 58 seconds into 3-on-3 OT to win it for Montreal as Washington's Alex Ovechkin scored his 699th career goal and closed in on another milestone.

Ovechkin fired up the crowd by scoring in seven minutes in and came close to reaching 700 goals on a bang-bang play in the third period. Instead, he'll have to wait to become the eighth player in NHL his-



Philadelphia Flyers' Kevin Hayes, right, carries the puck across the blue line as Columbus Blue Jackets' Eric Robinson defends during the third period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020, in Columbus, Ohio.

Associated Press

tory to get to 700 as Washington lost its third straight. Washington has lost five of its past six games and seven of 10, falling out of first place in the Metropolitan Division. The Capitals are also 1-4-1 at home since the All-Star break.

Goaltender Braden Holtby allowed goals to Shea Weber, Brendan Gallagher and two to Chiarot on 32 shots.

Also scoring for Washington were Lars Eller and Tom Wilson, who forced the overtime with a goal with 20.1 seconds left.

BLUES 1, COYOTES 0

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Ryan O'Reilly scored and Jordan Binnington made 14 saves to lead St. Louis past Arizona.

Binnington recorded his second consecutive shutout and the eighth of his career. He had allowed at least three goals in eight straight starts prior to his shutout performances.

Antti Raanta stopped 45 of the Blues' season-high 46 shots on goal and fell to 13-14-13.

MAPLE LEAFS 4, PENGUINS 0

TORONTO (AP) — Jake Muzzin had a goal and two assists, Frederik Andersen made 24 saves and Toronto dealt Pittsburgh its most lopsided loss of the season. Toronto had dropped three of its last four, including a 5-2 loss at Pittsburgh on Tuesday. It was Andersen's second shutout of the season and No. 18 for his career.

William Nylander, Kasper Kapanen and Zach Hyman also scored for Toronto. John Tavares added two assists. Matt Murray made 26 stops for Pittsburgh.

JETS 5, SENATORS 1

OTTAWA, Ontario (AP) — Mark Scheifele snapped a 12-game scoring drought with three power-play goals, helping Winnipeg beat Ottawa.

Kyle Connor and Niko-laj Ehlers also scored for the Jets, who improved to 7-2-1 over their last 10 and moved into the first wild-card spot in the Western Conference. Laurent Brossoit made 29 saves for his sixth win of the season. Nick Paul scored for the Senators. Marcus Hogberg stopped 29 shots.

DEVILS 2, SHARKS 1

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Mackenzie Blackwood made 36 saves in winning his fifth straight start and New Jersey beat San Jose in a matchup of struggling franchises.

Defenseman P.K. Subban scored the winner on a power play early in the third period. Jesper Bratt had the other New Jersey goal. Nikita Gusev had assists on both. Defenseman Tim Heed scored for San Jose in the opener of its four-game trip. Martin Jones had 23 saves.

GOLDEN KNIGHTS 5, LIGHTNING 3

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Alec Martinez had a goal and an assist in his Vegas debut, and the Golden Knights stopped Tampa Bay's 11-game win streak.

Martinez, acquired in a trade with Los Angeles on

Wednesday, tied the game late in the first period. It was Martinez's second goal of the season; he also scored at Vegas on Jan. 9.

Paul Stastny, Mark Stone, Ryan Reaves and Max Pacioretty also scored for the Golden Knights. Marc-Andre Fleury made 24 saves while improving to 21-13-4 against Tampa Bay.

Vegas earned its fourth straight win and improved to 8-3-2 under coach Pete DeBoer, who took over for the fired Gerard Gallant on Jan. 15. The win pushed the Golden Knights into first place in the Pacific Division, one point ahead of Edmonton.

Steven Stamkos had two goals for Tampa Bay, and Kevin Shattenkirk also scored.

KINGS 5, PANTHERS 4

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Gabriel Vilardi had a goal and an assist in his NHL debut and Los Angeles opened a five-game homestand with a win over Florida.

Vilardi, who was the 11th overall pick in the 2017 draft, scored the fastest rookie debut goal in Kings history when he fired a wrist shot past Florida's Sergei Bobrovsky 86 seconds into the game.

Drew Doughty, Trevor Moore, Martin Frk and Ben Hutton also scored for Los Angeles. Jonathan Quick made 25 saves as the Kings snapped a three-game losing streak to Florida.

Aleksander Barkov had two goals, and Jonathan Huberdeau (three assists) and Mike Hoffman also scored for Florida. Bobrovsky finished with 35 saves.



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It's champs vs. cheaters as Nats and Astros meet Saturday

By KRISTIE RIEKEN

AP Sports Writer

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla.

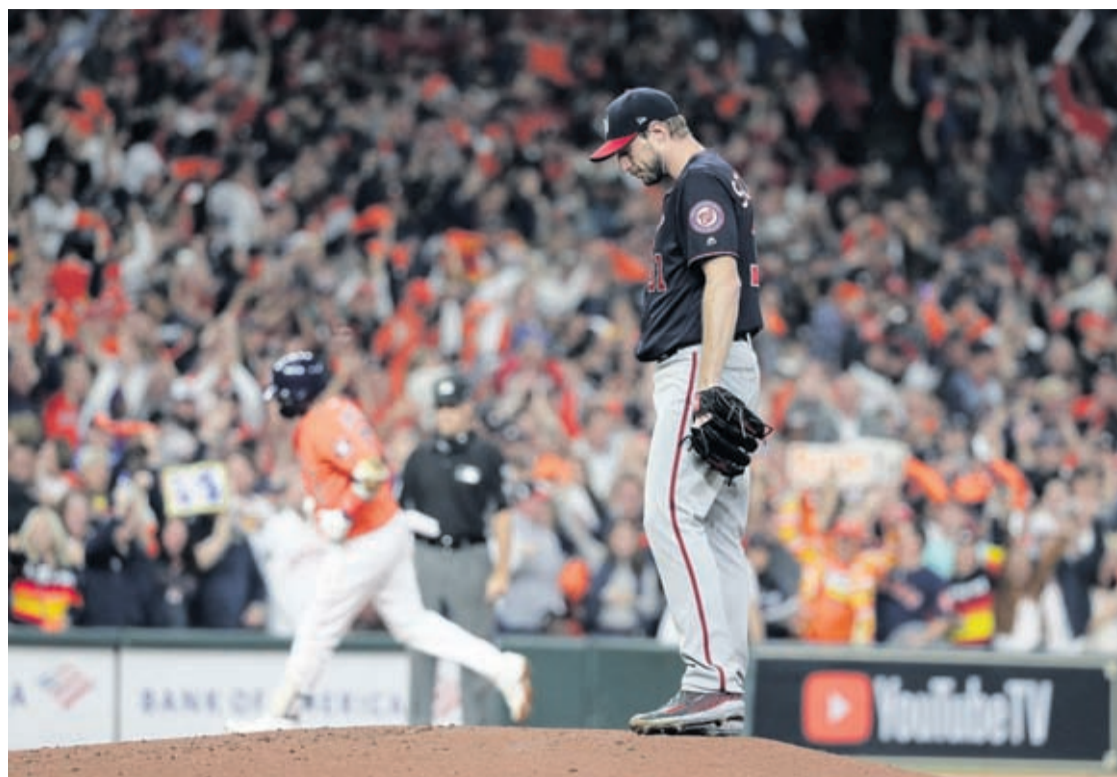
(AP) — It will be champs vs. cheaters in a World Series rematch when the Washington Nationals and Houston Astros play their exhibition opener on Saturday night.

The last time these teams met, the Nationals were celebrating their first World Series title in Houston after winning Game 7 at Minute Maid Park. Since then, the Astros have become the league's villains, with a sign-stealing scandal sullyng their reputation and casting a shadow on their 2017 title.

As the Astros prepare to take the field for the first time since their cheating scam was uncovered there's much speculation about what kind of reception they'll receive, though the players say they're focused on baseball.

"Honestly, I haven't thought about it," shortstop Carlos Correa said. "But whatever it is, our job is to go there and play baseball. So, I'm not too concerned about that."

There have been a handful of hecklers at Astros camp this week as the team assembled for the first time since Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred found they used electronics to steal signs during their run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season. The investigation, which led to the suspensions and subsequent firings of manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow, found the Astros used the video feed from a center field camera to see and decode the opposing catcher's signs. Play-



In this Oct. 30, 2019, file photo, Houston Astros' Yuli Gurriel hits a home run off Washington Nationals starting pitcher Max Scherzer during the second inning of Game 7 of the baseball World Series in Houston.

Associated Press

ers banged on a trash can to signal to batters what was coming, believing it would improve the batter's odds of getting a hit.

One man banged on a trash can as Astros players took batting practice Monday and someone yelled: "cheater" at second baseman Jose Altuve as he walked by fans the same day.

Correa, who was part of the team that was found to have stolen signs, knows things are going to be "tough" for the Astros on the road this season but doesn't expect things to be bad in a spring training game.

"But there's always going to be fans that are going to go to the ball park and have fun in their own way, and that's talking trash," Correa said. "And that's fine. You see that in every sport. So that shouldn't bother us."

New Houston manager

Dusty Baker hasn't spent any time concerning himself with how the Astros will be received.

"I try not to worry about things because it doesn't do any good," he said. "You can anticipate this or that, but you don't really know until you get there. So I'm not really worried about the reception."

While the Astros get peppered daily with questions about their cheating and are constantly being asked to comment on the negative reactions of players around the league, their spring training facility-mates are still basking in the glow of their championship.

On Thursday night, the Nationals continued celebrating their victory with a championship parade in downtown West Palm Beach. Fans cheered as players and staff rode

down the street showing off their trophy.

"In 2019 we were the best," manager Dave Martinez told the crowd at the end of the parade. "We were No. 1. We were the world champs and I want to thank all of you for sticking behind us."

Max Scherzer will start Saturday for the Nationals. He started and threw five innings in Washington's 6-2 win in Game 7 that gave the franchise its first title.

The 35-year-old said he's right where he needs to be and is feeling good as he prepares for his spring debut.

"Max is going to go out there and hopefully get them through the first inning, see how he feels, and if he can get out there for the second inning, that'd be great," Martinez said. "We'll cross that bridge when we get there. Right

now, it's just about feel and seeing where they're at."

Saturday's game will also pit Baker against the team that let him go after the 2017 season.

He's looking forward to seeing many of the people he worked with when he managed the Nationals from 2016-17. And even though it's the first game, he knows Scherzer will be ready to go.

"I'm sure he'll probably be the same old Scherz," Baker said. "He could be pitching at a high school game and he'll be fired up."

While people could come out to heckle the Astros, they likely won't be able to direct their ire at any players who were on the teams that stole signs. Baker said he doesn't plan to play any of Houston's regulars Saturday and wants to give the "kids" a chance to play in the opener.

To that end, right-hander Cristian Javier, who was Houston's minor league pitcher of the year last season, will start for the Astros. Houston third baseman Alex Bregman, who has taken criticism in recent days for a poorly received apology during a press conference about the sign-stealing, said they can't spend time worrying about how fans will react. But he did say that it's a unique situation to start spring training against the Nationals considering their recent history.

"It's tough to play first against the team that we lost to in the World Series," he said. "But they deserved it. They outplayed us. They have a great team over there and they really earned that World Series title." □

Bradley wins last arbitration case, teams have 7-5 margin

PHOENIX (AP) — Arizona reliever Archie Bradley won the final salary arbitration case of the year, leaving teams with a 7-5 advantage over players.

Bradley, a 27-year right-hander, was given a raise from \$1.83 million to \$4.1 million on Friday by arbitra-

tors Andrew Strongin, Steven Wolf and Jules Bloch. The Diamondbacks had argued for \$3,625,000. Bradley was 4-5 with a 3.52 ERA in 65 relief appearances and one start last year. He struck out 87 and walked 36 in 71 2/3 innings. Teams won six of the first seven

decisions, and players won four of the last five. Teams have had a winning record in four of the last six years; the exceptions were a 12-10 margin for players in 2018 and a 6-4 advantage last year, the first consecutive winning years for the players since 1989-90. A

relatively small percentage of players went to hearings among the 162 who were eligible after teams offered contracts on Dec. 2. Just 20 players exchanged proposed salaries with their clubs on Jan. 10 and nearly half of them wound up with agreements. Clubs defeat-

ed Philadelphia catcher J.T. Realmuto, Boston pitcher Eduardo Rodríguez, Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Joc Pederson, Minnesota pitcher José Berríos, Milwaukee closer Josh Hader, Atlanta reliever Shane Greene and Colorado catcher Tony Wolters. □

Continued from page 17

"Women's national team players are paid differently because they specifically asked for and negotiated a completely different contract than the men's national team, despite being offered, and rejecting, a similar pay-to-play agreement during the past negotiations," U.S. Soccer said in a statement. "Their preference was a contract that provides significant additional benefits that the men's national team does not have, including guaranteed annual salaries, medical and dental insurance, paid child-care assistance, paid pregnancy and parental leave, severance benefits, salary continuation during periods of injury, access to a retirement plan, multiple bonuses and more."

Molly Levinson, spokeswoman for the plaintiffs, disputed the federation's assertions.

"In the most recent CBA negotiation, USSF repeatedly said that equal pay was not an option regardless of pay structure," Levinson said in a statement. "USSF proposed a 'pay to play structure' with less pay across the board. In every instance for a friendly or competitive match, the women players were offered less pay than their male counterparts. This is the very definition of gender discrimination, and of course the players rejected it."

The lawsuit has drawn worldwide attention. When the U.S. won the World Cup final last summer in France, fans in the crowd chanted "Equal Pay! Equal Pay!"



U.S. forward Megan Rapinoe celebrates after scoring against Canada during the second half of a CONCACAF women's Olympic qualifying soccer match Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Carson, Calif. The U.S. won 3-0.

Associated Press

Earlier this month, the players union for the men's national team urged the federation to sharply increase pay for the women's team, while also accusing the governing body of making low-ball offers in current contract negotiations with the men's team.

Also among the documents filed Thursday were numerous pre-trial depositions. Megan Rapinoe, the reigning FIFA Player of the Year, was deposed Jan. 16. She said Russell Sawyer, an outside lawyer for the USSF, stated during a bargaining session in June 2016 that "market realities are such that the women do not deserve to be paid equally to the men."

USSF President Carlos Cordeiro was asked during a Jan. 29 deposition about a statement he made when

campaigning that "our female players have not been treated equally."

"I felt then and I still feel to a degree, that the lack of opportunity for our female players was really what was at the root of some of their issues," Cordeiro said. "The fact that the Women's World Cup generates a fraction of revenue and a fraction of what the men get paid is a reflection, frankly, of lack of opportunity. ... Women's soccer outside of the United States doesn't have the same degree of respect."

Former USSF President Sunil Gulati, speaking during a Dec. 17 deposition, discussed the distinctions between men's and women's soccer.

"There is an absolute difference, which not everyone seemed to agree to, but

do I think that it's less attractive or less entertaining? I'm not saying that. Or relative quality, I'm not saying that," he said. "But I'm also not saying, in terms of absolute level of -- whether it's speed or strength, they're the same. I think most people would accept that, too."

A U.S. man who was on the roster for all 16 qualifiers during the failed effort to reach the 2018 World Cup earned \$179,375 in payments from the U.S. Soccer Federation.

An American woman received \$52,500 for being on the roster for the five World Cup qualifiers last year plus \$147,500 for her time at the World Cup, including a \$37,500 roster bonus and \$110,000 for winning the title in France.

The USSF keeps 16-21 women's players under contract

in each year of the current labor deal, which runs through 2021, and pays each a \$100,000 salary. The federation also pays a minimum 22 players assigned to a club in the National Women's Soccer League, with each receiving \$70,000 to \$75,000 this year.

Women receive 75% of salary on maternity leave for up to one year, and a player has the longer of three months or two training camps to return to full fitness. A player can receive 75% of salary for up to three months when adopting a child and a \$50 daily stipend for child care during training and play. The USSF also pays for health, dental and vision insurance for the women. When the men last qualified for the World Cup in 2014, their player pool got a \$2 million payment, and each player earned \$55,000 for making the roster and \$5,500 per match. The player pool earned \$175,000 per point for the group phase, a total of \$700,000, plus \$3.6 million for reaching the round of 16. The USSF in its filing pointed out it received \$9 million from FIFA for the men reaching the second round of the 2014 World Cup, but \$2 million for the women winning in 2015 and \$4 million for their victory in 2019. There is parity is per diems: the women get \$62.50 daily while in the U.S. and \$75 internationally, the same as the men received under terms of their expired deal that covered 2015-18. And men and women both receive \$1.50 per paid attendance for home matches controlled by the USSF. □



Yulimar Rojas, of Venezuela celebrates after breaking the world record in the women's triple jump final during the World Athletics Indoor Tour meeting in Madrid, Spain, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Rojas breaks indoor triple jump world record

MADRID (AP) — Yulimar Rojas broke the indoor triple jump world record on Friday.

The two-time world champion from Venezuela had a jump of 15.43 meters, seven centimeters more than the previous record held by Russian Tatyana Lebedeva since 2004.

"I'm over the moon," Rojas

said. "I can't believe I'm the world record-holder. I want to get home and cry. I need to cry to release the adrenaline I have right now."

The jump at the Villa de Madrid meeting was two centimeters better than Rojas' outdoor personal best, and the second-best overall behind the outdoor world

record of 15.50 meters held by Ukrainian Inessa Kravets since 1995. □



Union committee rejects NFL labor deal; player reps to vote

By **BARRY WILNER**
AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The NFL players' union executive committee voted 6-5 Friday to recommend rejecting the terms of a labor deal approved by NFL owners the previous day.

The owners' proposal features a 17-game season, shorter preseason, larger rosters and limits on the number of international games. It will next be voted on by the 32 player representatives. Even if they reject it, the union is expected to bring the plan to the entire membership.

If the NFLPA does not approve the terms, the current collective bargaining agreement, which expires in March 2021, would remain in effect and further talks would be required.

The union's executive committee includes NFLPA President Eric Winston, former Giants linebacker Mark Herzlich and former Bills linebacker Lorenzo Alexander, all retired; Giants long snapper Zak DeOssie; 49ers cornerback Richard Sherman; Patriots tight end Benjamin Watson; Colts kicker Adam Vinatieri; Chargers tackle Russell Okung; Saints punter Thomas Morstead; Buccaneers linebacker Sam Acho; and Giants safety Mike Thomas.

Several people familiar with the terms say they feature increases in minimum salaries, changes in practice squad makeup and

eligibility, and reduced off-season and preseason requirements as pivotal parts of the deal.

Those people spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because specific details of the provisions in the agreement that would run through 2030 are not being made public.

Objections to an expanded regular season are considered the main stumbling block for player approval.

An expansion of the playoffs to seven teams in each conference, with only the top seed in the AFC and NFC getting a wild-card bye, can be instituted by the league without any negotiations — as long as the postseason remains in a four-week format. Several owners are strongly in favor of doing so regardless of the CBA status.

One of the wild-card weekend games might wind up as a Monday night contest. The 17-game schedule actually is a compromise offer for some owners who wanted 18 games.

Adding the one regular-season match would seem to indicate each of those games would be at a neutral site.

But the league has promised the union to cap the number of international games and that there would not be a full week of such contests. More likely is a continued mix of games in England (and other European sites) and Mexico.



Philadelphia Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie, front, leaves after NFL owners meet to discuss a proposed labor agreement, Thursday Feb. 20, 2020, in New York.

Associated Press

Most team schedules will have nine home games and eight road games in alternating years.

The preseason would be reduced from four games to three, not counting the Hall of Fame game that starts the exhibition schedule.

Training camp padded practices would be reduced from a total of 28 to 16. A five-day acclimation period would precede summer practices. There would be more days off during camp — eight in-

stead of five — and a limit on joint practices.

There would be no extra bye week in the regular season, something that had been discussed. However, teams would basically have two weeks to prepare for the season opener with the elimination of the fourth preseason game.

Rosters would expand from 53 to 55, with 48 players able to dress for games rather than the current 46. Practice squads would go from 10 players to 12 and

eventually to 14, probably by 2022. There would be more flexibility for protecting practice squaders from becoming free agents.

Suspensions for a positive test for marijuana likely would end, except for cases of tampering with a test. But doctors appointed by the league and union would have the ability to recommend players sit if they are not under treatment or are at risk if they suit up.

A major point of contention when the current agreement was reached in 2011 following a 4 1/2 month lockout was Commissioner Roger Goodell's role in discipline. Should these terms be accepted by the players, a neutral, jointly appointed hearing officer would make findings on off-field issues and whether the actions violated the league's personal conduct policy. Those findings would be binding, but a player could appeal — with Goodell making the final decision.

The terms contain substantial changes in a variety of fines for violating club rules to provide a scaled pricing discipline system. A maximum fine could not be rendered until a third violation. Significant boosts in pension for retired players and active ones also are provided in the contract. There are provisions for bringing in players who are not getting pensions, too. □

Yeshaneh sets world record in half marathon in Nike shoes

RAS AL KHAIMAH, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Ababel Yeshaneh set a world record in the women's half marathon on Friday in the latest breakthrough by athletes wearing high-tech Nike shoes.

The Ethiopian runner won the Ras Al Khaimah Half Marathon in 1 hour, 4 minutes, 31 seconds, knocking 20 seconds off the previous record set by Joyciline Jepkosgei in Valencia in 2017. "I didn't imagine this result," Yeshaneh said.

Brigid Kosgei, the marathon world record holder, also broke Jepkosgei's time while finishing second behind Yeshaneh.

Since 2018, the men's and women's records in both the marathon and half marathon have all been broken by athletes in Nike shoes. The Vaporfly range uses thick foam soles and a carbon plate to allow athletes to use their energy more efficiently.

The shoes have prompted concerns that athletes

sponsored by other companies have no chance of competing in key races, such as the upcoming Olympics.

World Athletics cleared athletes to keep using Nike Vaporfly-style shoes last month, even though it warned that rapid advances in shoe technology threaten "the integrity of the sport." The shoes meet new World Athletics rules on sole thickness and a requirement to be available for any athlete to buy. □



In this Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2020 photo, Nike's Air Zoom Alphafly Next% running shoe is displayed at the Nike 2020 Forum in New York.

Associated Press

EU proposes rules for artificial intelligence to limit risks

By KELVIN CHAN

LONDON (AP) — The European Union unveiled proposals Wednesday to regulate artificial intelligence that call for strict rules and safeguards on risky applications of the rapidly developing technology.

The report is part of the bloc's wider digital strategy aimed at maintaining its position as the global pacesetter on technological standards. Big tech companies seeking to tap Europe's vast and lucrative market, including those from the U.S. and China, would have to play by any new rules that come into force.

The EU's executive Commission said it wants to develop a "framework for trustworthy artificial intelligence." European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen had ordered her top deputies to come up with a coordinated European approach to artificial intelligence and data strategy 100 days after she took office in December.

"We will be particularly careful where essential human rights and interests are at stake," von der Leyen told reporters in Brussels. "Artificial intelligence must serve people, and therefore artificial intelligence must always comply with people's rights."

EU leaders, keen on es-



European Commissioner for Europe fit for the Digital Age Margrethe Vestager speaks during a presentation on Europe's Digital Future at EU headquarters in Brussels, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020.

Associated Press

establishing "technological sovereignty," also released a strategy to unlock data from the continent's businesses and the public sector so it can be harnessed for further innovation in artificial intelligence. Officials in Europe, which doesn't have any homegrown tech giants, hope to catch up with the U.S. and China by using the bloc's vast and growing trove of industrial data for what they anticipate is a coming wave of digital transformation.

They also warned that even more regulation for foreign tech companies is in store with the upcoming "Digital Services Act," a sweeping

overhaul of how the bloc treats digital companies, including potentially holding them liable for illegal content posted on their platforms. A steady stream of Silicon Valley tech bosses, including Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Google CEO Sundar Pichai and Microsoft President Brad Smith, have visited Brussels in recent weeks as part of apparent lobbying efforts. "It is not us that need to adapt to today's platforms. It is the platforms that need to adapt to Europe," said Thierry Breton, commissioner for the internal market. "That is the message that we delivered to CEOs of

these platforms when they come to see us."

If the tech companies aren't able to build systems "for our people, then we will regulate, and we are ready to do this in the Digital Services Act at the end of the year," he said.

The EU's report said clear rules are needed to address "high-risk AI systems," such as those in recruitment, healthcare, law enforcement or transport, which should be "transparent, traceable and guarantee human oversight." Other artificial intelligence systems could come with labels certifying that they are in line with EU stan-

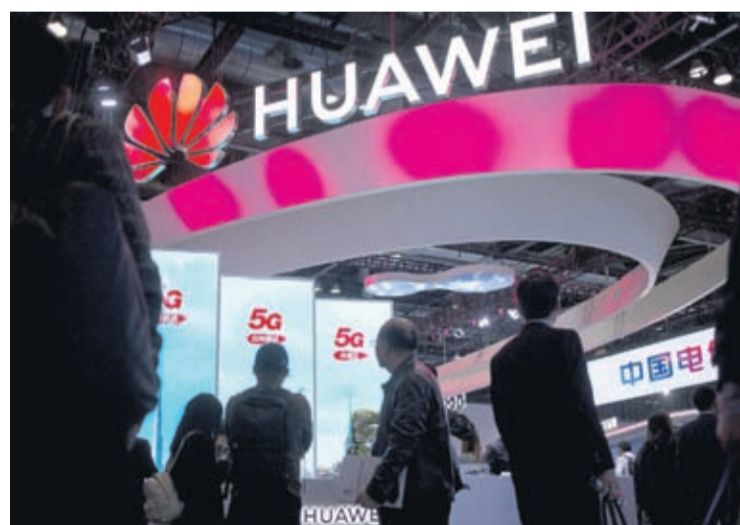
dards.

Artificial intelligence uses computers to process large sets of data and make decisions without human input. It is used, for example, to trade stocks in financial markets, or, in some countries, to scan faces in crowds to find criminal suspects.

While it can be used to improve healthcare, make farming more efficient or combat climate change, it also brings risks. It can be unclear what data artificial intelligence systems work off. Facial recognition systems can be biased against certain social groups, for example. There are also concerns about privacy and the use of the technology for criminal purposes, the report said.

Human-centered guidelines for artificial intelligence are essential because "none of the positive things will be achieved if we distrust the technology," said Margrethe Vestager, the executive vice president overseeing the EU's digital strategy.

Under the proposals, which are open for public consultation until May 19, EU authorities want to be able to test and certify the data used by the algorithms that power artificial intelligence in the same way they check cosmetics, cars and toys. □



In this Oct. 31, 2019, file photo, attendees walk past a display for 5G services from Chinese technology firm Huawei at the PT Expo in Beijing.

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — The top U.S. diplomat for cybersecurity policy says he welcomes European Union moves to-

ward recognizing the risks at stake in 5G technology, but warned that the U.S. will not be able to share

U.S. expert says 5G tiff could affect information exchanges

top-level information with countries that choose "untrusted" vendors, such as China's Huawei.

Robert Strayer, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cyber and International Communications and Information Policy at the U.S. State Department told journalists in Madrid that a new EU "5G toolbox" recognized security risks in 5G technology and that vendors must be trustworthy.

"There is a recognition that did not exist a year and a half ago in the European Union and elsewhere that

there are serious supply chain risks to 5G technology, that there are such things as high-risk vendors that operate in countries that do not have democratic checks and balances and that those types of countries present serious risk to our 5G networks" in their entirety, the official said.

Strayer was in Spain as part of a European tour as President Donald Trump's administration puts pressure on allies to avoid Chinese tech firm Huawei in next-generation mobile net-

works. The U.S. fears China's communist leaders can use the company to tap into communications in equipment Huawei sells globally. Strayer recognized that Spain and other countries would make up their own minds, but he reiterated recent U.S. warnings about the consequences of not following Washington's lead.

"If countries adopt untrusted technology in their 5G networks, that will jeopardize our ability to share information at the highest level," Strayer said. □

For-profit firm seeking to run .org names makes concessions

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A private equity firm seeking to buy rights to operate the internet's .org suffix said Friday it will cap price hikes and create an advisory board with veto powers to ease concerns from the nonprofit community.

Ethos Capital has offered \$1.1 billion to buy the Public Interest Registry, the nonprofit corporation that runs the databases containing more than 10 million .org names registered worldwide. Organizations ranging from the Girl Scouts of the USA and Consumer Reports to the American Bible Society have opposed the sale, warning of potential price gouging and censorship. California's attorney general has also requested information to evaluate a deal's potential impact to nonprofits. It wasn't immediately clear whether the concessions are enough to satisfy critics. The cap on price hikes, for instance, will expire in eight years, and most of the advisory board's initial members will be appointed by the Public Interest Registry's board.

Domain names such as ap-

news.com have historically been used by computers to find websites and send email, and their value grew as companies and groups adopted them for branding. The Associated Press, a nonprofit, also uses a .org domain, ap.org.

Though domain names are less prominent these days as more people reach websites using search engines and apps, they are still important for email addresses, billboards and other non-digital advertising. The Public Interest Registry is currently owned by the Internet Society, a nonprofit founded by many of the internet's early engineers and scientists. In that role, the registry collects annual fees of about \$10 per .org registration. The Internet Society uses some of that revenue to fund advocacy and administrative programs, which include creating technical standards for the internet.

A sale to Ethos Capital wouldn't immediately affect existing .org names or the websites that use them. Although .org is often associated with nonprofit organizations, it can already



In this Jan. 24, 2020 file photo, Cory Doctorow, right, walks in front of other protestors in Los Angeles outside the headquarters of the regulatory body for domain names, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers.

Associated Press

by registered by anyone, including for-profit corporations and individuals. That won't change if it gets a for-profit owner.

But some critics fear that future policies could reduce protections for domain name owners. For instance, websites can suddenly become unreachable if whoever owns the registry sus-

pends a .org name at the urging of a government or business rival, without giving the website a chance to plead its case. Critics are particularly worried that authoritarian countries could target human rights groups and other nongovernmental organizations this way. Critics are also worried that financial pressures on a for-

profit company could result in price hikes. To address concerns, Ethos agreed Friday to limit price hikes to an average of 10% per year for eight years. The Public Interest Registry had a binding 10% cap that expired in June, though that restriction wasn't an average and didn't allow for higher hikes in some years. □

Deere sees some stability on farms in bruising trade fight

By **MICHELLE CHAPMAN**
AP Business Writer

Deere & Co. had a surprisingly strong first quarter after an extended period in which the tractor and construction equipment maker was bruised by the ongoing trade war between the United States and China.

"Farmer confidence, though still subdued, has improved due in part to hopes for a relaxation of trade tensions and higher agricultural exports," CEO John May said in a prepared statement Friday.

China announced Friday that it suspended more punitive tariffs on imports of U.S. industrial goods in response to a truce in its trade war with Washington. Under their "Phase 1" agreement signed in Janu-

ary, Washington agreed to cancel additional tariff hikes and Beijing committed to buy more American farm exports.

China's retaliatory tariffs have clobbered exports of soybeans and other commodities, hurting farmers, and in turn, farming equipment manufacturers.

The Trump administration has provided \$27 billion in aid to farmers to ease the pain of his trade war. And in a tweet Friday, he promised to expand the bailout if farmers need it as they await the economic benefits of his recent trade deals with Mexico, Canada and China. He said the aid would be financed by revenue from his tariffs on foreign goods — taxes that are paid by American im-

porters.

Deere, based in Moline, Illinois, has posted three consecutive quarters of falling profits and slowing sales growth with trade tensions between the world's two largest economies ongoing.

And it stuck to a conservative outlook for the year.

Deere expects sales in its agriculture-and-turf business to fall between 5% and 10%, and a decline of between for those of the construction-and-forestry segment to fall 10% to 15%.

Like almost all multinational operators, Deere is navigating the virus outbreak in China that has spread elsewhere.

Caterpillar has included a \$40 million cost increase to its supply lines, said Chief



In this Sept. 10, 2019, file photo a John Deere tractor is on display at the Husker Harvest Days farm show in Grand Island, Neb. Deere & Co. reports earnings on Thursday, Feb. 20, 2020.

Associated Press

Financial Officer Ryan Campbell in a conference call Friday.

"When we think about kind of the impacts a and potential impacts of the coronavirus, there's kind of two components that we've mentioned," Campbell said. "One is direct exposure, our sales into the China market. Relatively small

for our Ag & Turf business and for our traditional C&F business. Road building, though, has a bigger exposure there, so road building in China will tend to be 10% to 15% of their overall sales. So more of an impact there." For the three months ended Feb. 2, Deere & Co. earned \$517 million, or \$1.63 per share. □

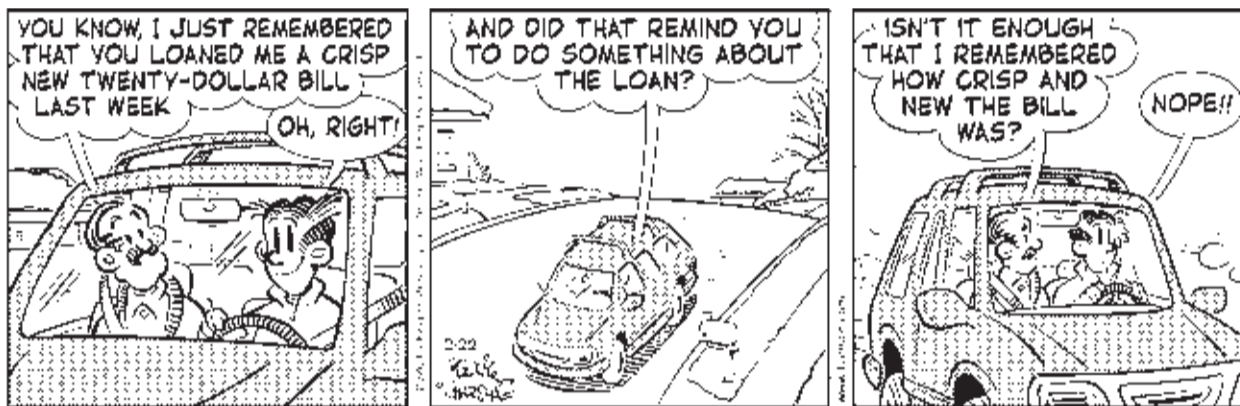
Mutts



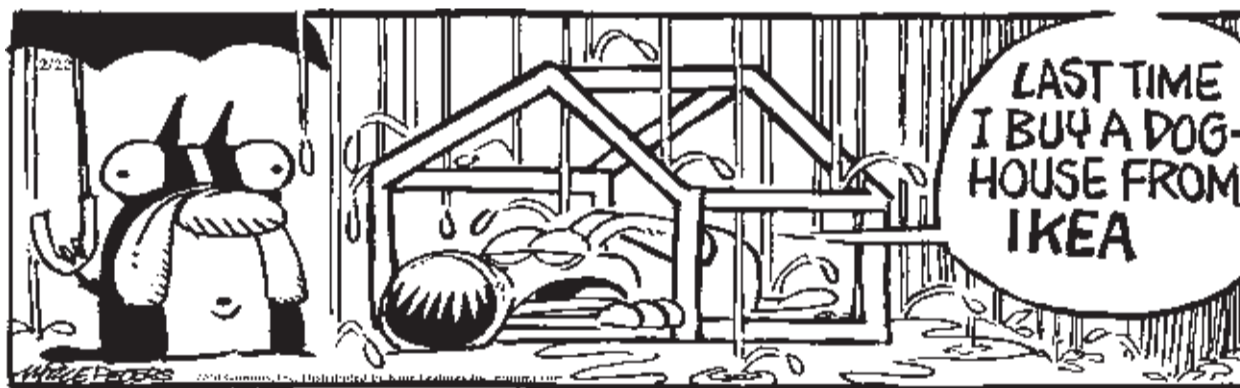
6 Chix



Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

8	4		6		2			
		1		9			5	
2	6			7		1		3
						5		
	1		3					
9			5			2		7
	2		8			4		

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

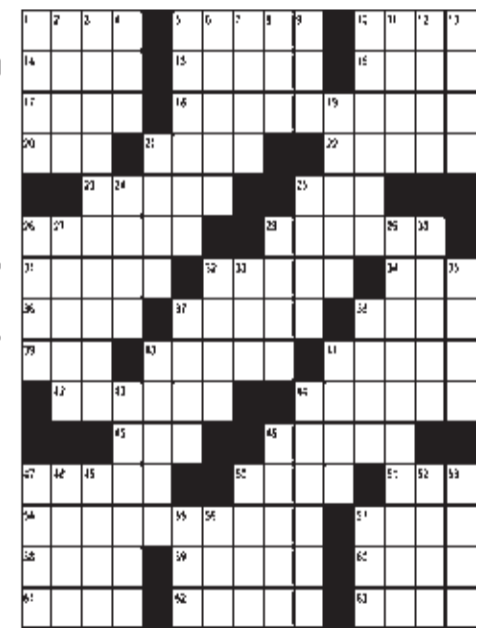
6	3	2	8	4	1	7	9	5
1	4	9	5	3	7	6	8	2
8	5	7	6	9	2	4	1	3
9	6	1	3	2	4	5	7	8
3	2	8	7	1	5	9	4	6
5	7	4	9	8	6	3	2	1
2	9	3	4	5	8	1	6	7
7	8	5	1	6	9	2	3	4
4	1	6	2	7	3	8	5	9

ACROSS

- Shoo!
- Canavera & Cod
- Av'ing
- Candy
- Yuletide treat
- Make augh
- Geller's focus
- As wise as
- Corridor
- Org. for Sharks & Stars
- Nonsense!
- up on: studies about
- Narrow valleys
- Ready... go!
- Paper fold
- Visitors
- Place of refuge
- lak, latter
- Objective
- Any wocash
- Spirited horse
- St. x for honor or suit
- lao toe
- steak meal for London bro
- Sooths
- Fish mark
- Wags leisurely
- Near the ground
- Treaties
- Gunny & Volguity
- Piece of china
- Get! hate average
- Amounts
- Beauty mark
- Unusual
- Carol: ne to RPK
- Bereavement
- NBA team
- Highest mountain range outside Asia
- Tie the... marry

DOWN

- Read over quickly
- Money
- Pink fliers
- Two and three and five
- Gangster A
- Accountant
- Read over quickly
- Money
- Pink fliers
- Two and three and five
- Gangster A
- Accountant



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/22/20

Friday's Puzzle Solved

THEN	PREP	STAR
HOMER	ROAR	HOB0
IRATE	ATROCIOUS	
SAN CAN	PRETTY	
CRACK	HAS	
ORIOLE	SEPTIC	
NEPAL	PRESS	MAD
CHAD	LOFTY	SPRY
EAT	RINKS	PEEVE
BEHIND	SOAREO	
EFG	JAILS	
EXHALE	UPS	OFF
TRAVERSED	ERNIE	
CARE	IOWA	DEALT
HYMN	EYES	FLEA

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2/22/20

- Winter coating
- Diamond or Ness
- LaGuardia
- armys
- Turnons
- Portion
- NO to cowers
- Banquet with toast pig
- Be a
- breaswimmer
- Passed away
- foo
- Take a nap
- snapp instantly
- Cheap metal
- Cordelia's ace
- hubby for short

After residents cry fowl: Miami to relocate pack of peacocks

MIAMI (AP) — A pack of peacocks that has wreaked havoc on a Miami neighborhood will be relocated after city commissioners voted Thursday night to side with residents and agreed to have the birds taken away. It was a big win for many residents who have complained that the birds have taken control of a Coconut Grove neighborhood, mating into the night, pooping in large piles and scratching cars as they travel in packs of 20 to 40 or more, the Miami Herald reported. Andrews Candela told commissioners before Thursday night's vote that he once felt lucky to live in North Grove, but the massive infestation of peacocks have ruined the quality of life for him and his wife. "I don't want to remain forgotten in a filthy, dirty peacock land as hostage to a group of birds," Candela said. "I think that is more than unfair." Commissioners unanimously agreed to amend the city's charter to allow for trapping and removal of excess peacocks. The proposal was introduced by Commissioner Ken Russell in October. □

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*WK. 52 OV \$49k

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Groups want cows corralled to protect jumping mouse habitat

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)

— Environmentalists have accused U.S. land managers of failing to keep livestock and wild horses out of streams and other wetlands in Arizona's White Mountains, resulting in damage to habitat required by a rare mouse species found only in the Southwest.

The lawsuit filed Thursday in U.S. District Court in Tucson said the U.S. Forest Service is violating the Endangered Species Act and damaging the New Mexico meadow jumping mouse's habitat by failing to maintain fences, round up feral animals and enforce grazing regulations on forest land in southeastern Arizona.

With tails that make up most of their length, the rodents are called jumping mice because they can leap more than 2 feet (0.6 meters) into the air when frightened. Long tails help the mice keep their balance, especially when they scale plant stems to reach ripening seeds, one their main food sources.

The mice live near streams and depend on tall grass to hide from predators. They hibernate for about nine months, emerging in the late spring to gorge themselves before mating, giving birth and going back into hibernation. They normally live about three years. "We entrust the care and protection of these publicly owned treasures to the Forest Service, but it's completely abdicated its responsibility. And the adorable jumping mouse is being pushed closer to extinction," said Robin Silver, a cofounder of the Center for Biological Diversity, one of the groups that is suing. Staff members from the center and the Maricopa Audubon Society said they



his Nov. 1, 2016, file photo, provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shows Debra Hill weighing a New Mexico meadow jumping mouse, which was trapped during survey efforts on the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, N.M.

Associated Press

have documented extensive damage from horses and cows to the habitat of the mouse.

Officials in the Forest Service's Southwest region disputed the allegations in the lawsuit, saying the agency has been working since the mouse was listed as an endangered species in 2014 to use new and existing fencing to control livestock access to riverbank and wetland areas all while balancing water rights.

The battle over the meadow jumping mouse has lasted years. The listing of the mouse as endangered prompted the Forest Service to fence off streams and watering holes in some national forests to protect habitat thought to be ideal. Ranchers and others then complained that the federal government was trampling private access to public lands by cordon-

ing off areas important for livestock and other animals that call the arid region home.

In 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated nearly 22 square miles (57 square kilometers) along about 170 miles (274 kilometers) of streams, ditches and canals as critical habitat in parts of New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona.

Silver said by not protecting these upper-elevation meadows and streams, the loss of the mouse in eastern Arizona and the Sacramento Mountains in southeastern New Mexico is likely.

Forest Service spokesman Shayne Martin said the mouse will benefit from work being done to protect stream-side habitats.

The agency in 2018 partnered with Trout Unlimited and volunteers on planting willows along Arizona's Centerfire Creek. □

Computer scientist who pioneered 'copy' and 'paste' has died



In this 1970s photo provided by Xerox PARC, Larry Tesler uses the Xerox Parc Alto early personal computer system.

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Larry Tesler, the Silicon Valley pioneer who created the now-ubiquitous computer concepts such as "cut," "copy" and "paste," has died. He was 74.

He made using computers easier for generations as a proponent and pioneer of what he called "modeless editing." That meant a user wouldn't have to use a keyboard to switch between modes to write and edit, for example.

"The inventor of cut/copy & paste, find & replace, and more was former Xerox researcher Larry Tesler. Your workday is easier thanks to his revolutionary ideas," Xerox said in a tweet Wednesday.

Tesler was born in New York and attended Stanford University, where he received a degree in mathematics in 1965.

In 1973, he joined Xerox Palo Alto Research Center, a division of the copier

company that worked on creating computer products. There, he pioneered concepts that helped make computers more user-friendly. That included such concepts as moving text through cut and paste and inserting text by clicking on a section and just typing.

He continued that work when he joined Apple in 1980. At Apple, he worked on a variety of products including the Lisa computer, the Newton personal digital assistant and the Macintosh. After leaving Apple in 1997 he co-founded an education software company and held executive positions at Amazon, Yahoo and the genetics-testing service 23andMe before turning to independent consulting.

In 2012, Tesler told the BBC that he enjoyed working with younger people.

"There's a very strong element of excitement, of being able to share what you've learned with the next generation," he said. □

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24/7

Appeals court approves of \$6.7M award to graffiti artists

By LARRY NEUMEISTER

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A federal appeals court in New York gave its approval Thursday to a \$6.7 million award for nearly two dozen graffiti artists whose spray paintings at a once-famous site that attracted thousands of spectators were destroyed to make room for high-rise luxury residences.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals concluded that a judge was correct to award the damages against developers who destroyed the aerosol artwork in 2013. The appeals court said the action violated the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990, which protects art which has gained recognition.

The Long Island City, Queens, graffiti site known as 5Pointz was a tourist attraction that drew thousands of spectators daily and formed a backdrop to the 2013 movie, "Now You See Me." It was also a site for an Usher tour. Many of the art works were temporary.

"In recent years, 'street art,'



In this Wednesday, Jan. 26, 2011 file photo, a man shovels snow to clear a driveway near 5pointz, a graffiti art gallery in the Long Island City neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York.

Associated Press

much of which is 'temporary,' has emerged as a major category of contemporary art," the 2nd Circuit said in an opinion written by Circuit Judge Barrington D. Parker.

The decision noted that the street artist Banksy has appeared alongside former

President Barack Obama and the late Apple Inc. founder Steve Jobs on Time magazine's list of the world's 100 most influential people. "A Banksy painting at 5Pointz would have possessed recognized stature, even if it were temporary," the appeals court said.

Since 2002, walls at the 5Pointz site had contained over 10,000 works of art as some of the renderings were temporary and were eventually painted over with the permission of the artists.

In 2013, developers seeking to capitalize on the rebirth

of a once crime-ridden neighborhood destroyed the artwork after banning artists from the area and refusing to let them recover work that could be removed.

After artists sued, U.S. District Judge Frederic Block in Brooklyn concluded that the art works reflected "striking technical and artistic mastery and vision worthy of display in prominent museums if not on the walls of 5Pointz."

The judge made the award higher than it otherwise would have been after concluding the destruction of the art was willful because the artists were not given three months that the law allows to salvage their artwork.

A lawyer for the developers declined comment.

In a statement, attorney Eric Baum said the artists "are thankful and humbled by today's ruling."

The lawyer said the ruling was "a clear indication these Artists' work is important and should be respected." □

Armani rails against baring trends by fellow designers

By COLLEEN BARRY

AP Fashion Writer

How much to show and how much not to show, that is the fashion question this season.

It may be reductive to say that runway shows are about how women dress. But the conversation has sharpened in the #MeToo era. Is a sheer dress that reveals the undergarments beneath, however prettily prepared, empowering or exploitative? What about conspicuous displays of skin?

Giorgio Armani responded to the question elegantly in the latest collection for his youthful Emporio Armani line, offering women a range of options that are appropriate for their age and shape. The 85-year-old designer also gave a passionate backstage discourse about the body-baring collections of fellow designers, saying he thinks

they reveal too much at the expense of women. Some highlights from Friday's womenswear trends for next fall and winter:

EMPORIO ARMANI RAILS AGAINST TRENDS

Giorgio Armani railed against colleagues who, in the name of trends, push the limit on revealing garments, enticing women to make choices that might be inappropriate for their age, shape or occasion.

"We say that women are being raped in a corner. Women continue to be raped by designers," Armani said Friday during a backstage news conference in Milan. Pressed to clarify, he said: "Women can be raped in various ways. Throwing her under a stairwell or suggesting she dresses in a certain way. For me, that is raping a woman."

The words were strong, and Armani's press office



Designer Giorgio Armani accepts applause at the conclusion of the Emporio Armani men's Fall-Winter 2020/21 collection, that was presented in Milan, Italy, Saturday, Jan. 11, 2019.

Associated press

said later that the 85-year-old designer was speaking metaphorically and passionately about a direction in luxury fashion that he sees as damaging to women's images.

Armani has been dressing women for 45 years. One of his first design successes was a softened suit jacket, a creation that women of

that time say was immensely liberating in a way that is difficult to comprehend in the spandex era. He is one of the few designers who, when discussing his collections, makes clear he takes different body shapes into consideration.

In that vein, the Emporio Armani line took a stand against trends, targeting

youthful dressers who are not necessarily that young. For next fall and winter, he crafted a range of jackets, from long and flowing to short and pleated. Trousers were dressed up with silk draping.

The show closed with shimmering cocktail dresses that turned on elegant ruffles and floral constructions. The palette was dark blue and black, as well as deeper shades of peacock blue and emerald green.

"Trends are nothing," Armani said. "I am trying to improve the woman who is living now."

His recipe is simple: black works for everyone. "It helps women to acquire allure," he explained. Great legs can carry short skirts. Not so great legs, "a longer skirt with a little movement helps." Leggings are to be avoided for anyone with "a slightly accentuated behind." □



In this Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2020, photo, props manager Joo Dong-man, left, speaks as costume manager Yang Hee-hwa listens during an interview at a cafe in Ilsan, South Korea.

Associated Press

Cross-border S. Korean drama overcomes political risks

By JUWON PARK

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

For the South Korean crew behind the latest hit drama "Crash Landing on You," recreating the life in North Korea was a painstakingly meticulous process with big political risks.

"At first, we were even told not to use the word 'chairman' when referring to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, said Joo Dong-man, a props manager for the story about a South Korean billionaire heiress who accidentally paraglides into North Korea and falls in love with an army captain. Apart from its fantastical plot line with prominent stars like Hyun Bin and Son Ye-jin, the drama has been creating a buzz for its unconventional take on North Korea.

With detailed portrayals of the isolated country down to words, objects and the makeup style, the cross-border love story even drew praises from several North Korean defectors in South Korea. Behind the effort are people like Joo, who had soaked in almost everything about the secretive regime — collecting details from books, experts and North Korean escapees.

Joo said recreating life in North Korea was a difficult process, simply because there's no guidebook on multiple hurdles he had to hop over — skillfully and delicately — to accurately depict the country while dodging criticism. He said rules, self-imposed by the production team themselves, were arbitrary and frequently subject to change.

"Later, we got permission (to show propaganda slogans)," Joo told The Associated Press. He said three

names from North Korea's ruling family dynasty — Kim Il Sung, Kim Jong Il, and Kim Jong Un — were banned till the very end.

The surreal plot — cross-border love between beautiful heiress and a handsome North Korean soldier from the top military family — doesn't fail to show occasional glimpses into the most repressive authoritarian regime in the world. The team had to tread carefully in order to avoid glorifying or misrepresenting the state.

They blurred the portraits of the Kim dynasty, which are mandatory in public places and private homes in North Korea. Objects displaying the faces of the Kims are practically illegal in South Korea, where wearing or possessing them could be considered praising the regime, which is punishable by law. The two rivals are still technically in a state of war.

Since all North Korean adults are required to wear a pin with the leaders' images to show their loyalty, Yang Hee-hwa, a costume manager, said the cast had to wear them too. But she devised her own safe way of doing so. "Our badges were almost half or one third smaller (than actual badges)," Yang told AP.

The team created scenes that had "the least resemblance to South Korea," according to Joo. He said the most difficult props was smartphones made in North Korea, which came from a series of meetings with defectors, including one based in Yanji, the Chinese city near North Korea. Joo declined to comment further on the process due to sensitivity of the matter. Joo brought with him three North Korean phones, each as much as three times the

price of an iPhone.

Joo said some scenes were exaggerated for theatrical reason. One scene where a woman puts together a makeshift plastic shower stall to keep the water warm for longer drew a complaint from one of defectors for being "too condescending." The defector who advised the team had told him that such method was used in the 1960s.

However, Kang Na-ra, a Youtuber who defected in 2014, said people living in rural parts of North Korea still use it. Kang was one of the escapees who provided real-life depictions of North Korea — from a group kimchi-making session to a popular make-up style that emphasizes the eyebrows. The South Korean actors speak with a North Korean accent and use expressions less familiar in the South.

The drama series aired its final episode this week. For Yang, this was an opportunity to create something new. "Everything we did was the first so there wasn't any benchmark (to follow)," said Yang. "I think we've created the benchmark."

"To be honest, we always showed poor and famished scenes when it comes to North Korea," Kang said. "But I really like this drama because it shows that North Korea is also a place with people, and they know how to share despite the scarcity."

The drama is one of a few reminders of Kang's far-away home. It's also a distant place for both Joo and Yang, because neither nation allows contact with the other's citizens.

"I thought about how nice it would've been to film in Pyongyang," Joo paused. "Well the time will come one day." □

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PH MON-FRI 6:40 | 8:50

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FRI 5:30 | 7:35 | 9:40 | 11:45

SAT 3:25 | 5:30 | 7:35 | 9:40 | 11:45

SUN 3:25 | 5:30 | 7:35 | 9:40

THE CALL OF THE WILD

HARRISON FORD | KAREN GILLAN

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH MON-FRI 6:00 | 8:35

FRI 6:00 | 8:35 | 11:05

SAT 3:25 | 6:00 | 8:35 | 11:05

SUN 3:25 | 6:00 | 8:35

PBP MON-FRI 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10

SAT-SUN 1:40 | 4:10 | 6:40 | 9:10

THE GENTLEMEN

MATTHEW MCCONAUGHEY | CHARLIE HUNNAM

PBP MON-FRI 4:05 | 6:40 | 9:15

SAT-SUN 1:30 | 4:05 | 6:40 | 9:15

EMMA.

ANYA TAYLOR-JOY | TANYA REYNOLDS

PH MON-FRI 6:00

SAT-SUN 3:20 | 6:00

BLUE STORY

STEPHEN ODUBOLA | MICHAEL WARD

PH MON-FRI 8:45

SAT-SUN 8:45 | 10:50

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

JAMES MARSDEN | JIM CARREY

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH MON-THU 6:00 | 8:20

FRI 6:00 | 8:20 | 10:40

SAT 3:40 | 6:00 | 8:20 | 10:40

SUN 3:40 | 6:00 | 8:20

CXC MON-THU 5:40 | 8:00

FRI 5:40 | 8:00 | 10:20

SAT 3:20 | 5:40 | 8:00 | 10:20

SUN 3:20 | 5:40 | 8:00

PBP MON-THU 4:20 | 6:35 | 8:50

FRI 4:20 | 6:35 | 8:50 | 11:05

SAT 2:05 | 4:20 | 6:35 | 8:50 | 11:05

SUN 2:05 | 4:20 | 6:35 | 8:50

PBP MON-FRI 4:55 | 7:10

SAT-SUN 2:40 | 4:55 | 7:10

BAD BOYS FOR LIFE

WILL SMITH | MARTIN LAWRENCE

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PH MON-THU 6:05 | 8:40

FRI 6:05 | 8:40 | 11:15

SAT 3:30 | 6:05 | 8:40 | 11:15

SUN 3:30 | 6:05 | 8:40

PBP MON-FRI 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20

SAT-SUN 1:20 | 4:00 | 6:40 | 9:20

BIRDS OF PREY

MARGOT ROBBIE | MARY ELIZABETH WINSTED

WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

PBP MON-THU & SUN 9:25

FRI-SAT 9:25 | 11:40

FANTASY ISLAND

LUCY HALE | MAGGIE Q

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Roman Forum find could be shrine to Rome's founder, Romulus

ROME (AP) — Italian archaeologists unveiled to the press Friday an exciting new find from the Roman Forum, which they say could be the lost shrine dedicated some 2,600 years ago to Romulus, Rome's legendary founder and first king.

Visually, the discovery first announced Tuesday is not very remarkable: Peering down in an excavated space beneath the Curia Julia, or ancient senate house, one sees something resembling a washtub that archaeologists say is a sarcophagus, or stone coffin. There's also a cylindrical stone block, a chunky stub of what might have been an altar.

Both items are made of tuff, carved from the Capitoline Hill that overlooks the Forum, and which is home to today's City Hall.

The recently excavated area "represents a place, which in history and in the Roman imagination, speaks about the cult of Romulus," said archaeologist Patrizia Fortini.

Fortini says no one's hypothesizing the sarcophagus actually ever contained the bones of Romulus who, with his twin Remus, established the city near the Tiber River around 753 B.C. and founded the kingdom of Rome. It likely dates to the 6th Century BC, some 200 years after Romulus' time.

"We don't know whether Romulus physically existed" the way he was described in legends, Fortini said.

But some ancient sources claimed that Romulus was buried in the area of the find, and the sarcophagus could have served as a memorial.

Alfonsina Russo, the archaeologist in charge of the site, noted that according to some ancient traditions Romulus was killed and chopped to pieces, or ascended into heaven.

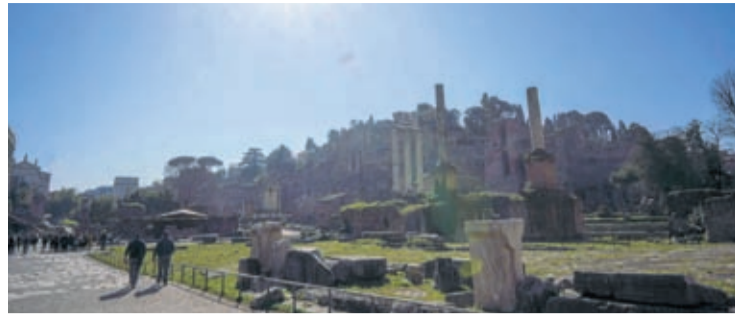
"Therefore, this cannot be his tomb, but it is very likely, we believe, that this is a memorial site, a cenotaph," Russo added.

While excavations continue, authorities hope the public will be able to stroll underground to view the find in about two years.

Boni attributed no particular importance to his finds, and in the 1930s, during

the regime of dictator Mussolini, a monumental staircase to the Curia building was built over the site.

"We thought it would have been destroyed" by the 1930s construction above ground, Russo said. □



A view of the ancient Roman Forum where archaeologists found an underground chamber containing a 1.4-meter (55-inch) wide sarcophagus and what appears to be an altar dating back to the 6th Century B.C., in Rome, Friday, Feb. 21, 2020.

Associated Press

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